

E X A M P L E ;

OR,

F A M I L Y S C E N E S .

“ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew v. 16.

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PREFACE.

THE object of this little Volume is to exhibit the powerful influence of Example, for evil and for good, upon human character and conduct. Religious example, though it opens not the “wicket gate” to the Pilgrim from the City of Destruction, yet holds up “a burning and a shining light” to warn the careless soul, and to point out the narrow path “that leadeth unto life.” The form of a domestic story has been adopted, in order to present to youthful readers, in a more interesting and familiar manner, the important lessons it is the author’s aim to inculcate; and to enable him to exhibit, in a more striking point of view, the wide contrast that exists

between the fruits of “true holiness,” and those of the “natural and unrenewed heart,”—however amiable, externally, the latter may appear. If these objects shall be, by this slight performance, in any degree attained, and the cause of Evangelical Religion thereby promoted, however humbly, the author’s highest aim in its publication will be accomplished.

CAMBRIDGE,

July, 1832.

EXAMPLE;

FAMILY SCENES.

CHAPTER I.

“ No plainer truth appears :—
Our most important are our earliest years.
The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes, and copies all she hears and sees.”

“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.”

Exodus, xxiii. 2.

Who can contemplate, with cold indifference, the pernicious effects which thousands of our fellow-creatures have experienced, by imbibing the corrupt and unwholesome atmosphere of an ill-directed influence ? How has it deformed and defaced the fairest promise of hope ; how has it demoralized the system—perverted the judgment—blinded the understanding, and

(terror-striking consideration !) drawn its unthinking victim within the power “ of that worm which never dieth.”

Great and manifold are the difficulties which impede man's progress after holiness, and mighty are the bulwarks which Satan erects to deter him from the attempt ; the weapons of *his* spiritual warfare are never relinquished, his ready agents are never supine in their attendance, nor are objects ever wanting on which to display his malignant power ; can we then wonder, that so effectual an engine as evil “ example ” should be a main instrument of man's spiritual adversary, to pervert his mind and draw him to perdition ? But has man no means of defence ? Must he unresistingly yield to this iniquitous attack ? Has he nothing wherewith to impede the progress of this foaming and destructive avalanche ? Surely, the same Scripture which commands him to resist the devil, also points to whence he may obtain a powerful and suitable equipment ; the Christian armoury is accessible to all, and when arrayed in truth, righteousness, peace and faith, and armed with the sword of the Spirit, man can, by the preventing grace of God, bring to nought the machinations of the evil one.

But it is evident from reason and experience, that the contagion of bad example is not thus opposed by the multitude; they unthinkingly rush into the snare, they willingly embrace the temptation to which the inherent depravity of their nature inclines them; or, confiding in their own might, they offer to parley with the enemy, and think to remain passive. Alas! how fatally are they deceived! That active, stirring power, the mind, will not be compelled to observe a neutrality, it will either embrace or reject the tempting offers of the soul's destroyer, and embrace them too, perhaps, without examining the foundation of the glittering fabric which imagination portrays, or deducting consequences from its rapid erection.

In the spring-time of life, youth enters on the busy world, and is speedily immersed in all its frivolous and time-consuming enjoyments. Imagination clothes the perspective in robes of brightness, anticipation holds the pallet, and fancy dips her falsely illumined pencil into the rainbow hues of hope, and sketches, on the mental canvass, the bright fairy being of its own creation; for awhile these glowing tints may appear to bear the impress of reality, the charm of novelty, the excited and buoyant tem-

perament of youth—its careless indifference beyond the events of the moment—its proneness to cleave to what is perishable, and its inherent distaste for higher pursuits, all necessarily tend to realize its high expectation, and to add to its preconceived errors; but, mark the picture, when experience has stripped it of its imaginary excellencies, when enjoyment has deprived it of that newness, which was its first and most powerful charm. Youth advances into manhood, and each day testifies to the fallacy of his fond expectations, the incorrectness of his first impressions. Where is the happiness and peace of mind which, in the carelessness of his heart, he had considered as certain? The hollowness of professing friendship; the excitements he meets with to jealousy, envy, hatred, and excess; together with the deteriorating progress of example, rob him of the simplicity of early years, deprive him of the generous warmth of affection, and, rudely tearing the pleasing veil of delusion from his heart, present, in its deformed aspect, the once fair ideal being of his own creating. But by what strange infatuation is it, that when thus partially enlightened as to the imposition he practised on himself; after testifying the unsoundness of his

judgment and the hopelessness of his desires; the man of the world should still bow submissively to the objects he despises, should still willingly yield to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," as though he had covenanted afresh with Satan, to serve him with redoubled energy;—what, but to the power of example? Constitutionally imitative, and often insensible to the fascinating influence of evil companionship, man naturally imbibes and follows whatever is most consonant to his own feelings; the powers of his conscience become paralysed by his being habituated to contemplate the union of iniquity with his idea of knowledge, the assimilation of malevolence with high intellectual powers. Enslaved by a delusion far more powerful than what at first possessed him, he is borne down on the stream of corruption, and unimpedingly rushes to his destruction.

Having seen the unnumbered miseries which example, exerted in the cause of ungodliness, may produce, is it unreasonable to expect that that same power, if exerted in an equal degree towards what is good, and praiseworthy, and lasting, might be productive of commensurate benefits? Susceptible of impression, the mind

naturally assimilates itself to the prevailing habits around ; but if, instead of being led to the corrupt fountain of fashion and worldliness, or to the destructive haunts of vice and impurity, the youthful mind was to be contrariwise directed ; if, instead of inhaling that pestiferous breath which is only calculated to inflame its natural corruption, it was to be enjoined Christian precepts, to be impressed with Christian principles, but, above all, to be strengthened and confirmed in the path of duty by Christian example, why might we not sanguinely anticipate corresponding results ? If the power of example was individually exerted to promote the growth of virtue, and resist the natural desire to evil, by *practically* condemning vice, how would the before dreary and barren wilderness abound in fresh springs of purest crystal, and be enamelled with ever-blooming flowers—how would the baneful and meretricious waste, which yielded obnoxious and poisonous weeds, meet the eye loaded with healing herbs, and replete with peace and serenity ? That example has power to effect all this, we contend not ; the change of heart alone belongs to God : but does he not, in his inscrutable mercy, use this as an instrument to turn the hearts of the disobedi-

ent? Does he not often dart conviction through a sinner's heart, by the pious example of a child of God? Does he not frequently implant corresponding feelings in the mind of a reprobate, should he happen to mark the consistency and peace of a Christian's life. He does;—and, aiding the awakened sinner to shake off his earthly, sin-bound fetters, to relinquish his deep devotedness to things below the skies, he excites him to follow the examples of the blessed people of God, and with them to aspire after unfading happiness and glories eternal.

My young readers will doubtless consider this a very unnecessary preamble; but, not to weary their patience by continuing our remarks, we proceed to their exemplification.

Towards the close of a dark December evening, a travelling carriage, bearing evident marks of a long journey, stopped before an elegant house in one of the principal squares in London; the smoking and jaded horses gladly yielded to the postillion's check; a thundering knock was answered by the appearance of an old and bulky porter, and the carriage door being flung open, a young gentleman of pleasing exterior descended, evidently as well satisfied as the tired animals at the termination of

his journey; offering his arm, he assisted his aunt, Miss Evelyn, to alight, while his sister, impatient at the delay occasioned by the tedious descent of the old lady, happily considered that there was more than one way of egress, and, opening the opposite door, she gained the ground in a moment.

While the travellers are being ushered up stairs, and warmly welcomed by their expecting friends, we may draw for our young readers a slight sketch of the family party.

Edgar Evelyn had but lately returned from the continent, where he had for some time been travelling in company with an infidel and profligate friend, whose pernicious sentiments he had fully imbibed, and with whom he still kept up a correspondence, continuing to drink deeper at the fountain of uncleanness, and inhaling the poisonous sentiments of the blasphemous authors of his creed,—the venom-issuing Rousseau, and the profane and soul-killing Voltaire.

With talents which, if rightly directed, must command esteem, and capabilities above the ordinary standard, Edgar Evelyn could not yet resist the fascinating influence of Melville's example; quickly and thoughtlessly he inhaled

the infection, grasped at the evil so temptingly offered, and, reckless of consequences, resigned his soul to the allurements of Satan. By the death of his father, he was unexpectedly recalled from the continent, and from the immediate influence of Melville. On his arrival in England, he found himself in possession of a considerable property, without incumbrance or embarrassment, and, now becoming perfect master of his movements, he purposed, after having paid his promised visits to his numerous friends, to return to his worthless associates. He had had the misfortune, at a tender age, to lose a pious and affectionate mother, whose precepts and holy example, had she lived, might, through the grace of God, have attracted him towards holiness, and preserved him from innumerable follies. Catharine, his sister, was too young, at that time, to be sensible of the irreparable loss she sustained; but often had Edgar listened with attention and childish delight to the sweet accents of his parent, when unfolding, in language suitable to his infantine understanding, the glorious gospel of the Redeemer. Her first endeavour was to impress his mind with a sense of the depravity of sin, and the natural consequences resulting

from its continuance—of the corruption of the heart, the power of Satan, and the temptations to which we are exposed by both; she would then direct her dear child's attention to the necessity of a change of heart, and the power of God alone to effect it, our own inability to make the necessary surrender of the will and affections, and our consequent lost state, without a Saviour to redeem, and a Holy Spirit to sanctify us. These formed the ground-work of a parent's instruction, and of many a secret and heartfelt prayer; but poor Edgar was left motherless, and, amidst the giddy pursuits of childhood, and in the vicious paths of youth and manhood, a mother's cautions were forgotten, or, if remembered, were stifled in their birth, or treated only with contempt.

He was now, for the first time, about to visit his maternal uncle, Mr. Cameron; the distance at which they lived, together with a dissimilarity of tastes and sentiments, had kept them long a disunited family; but, on the death of his father, Edgar unhesitatingly accepted his uncle's friendly invitation, and, accompanied by his sister and aunt, repaired to the metropolis. His sister, a petted and spoiled child of fortune, had looked forward with the great-

est delight to an introduction to her cousin Fanny, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Cameron; this, added to the delight of a first visit to London, had kept her in a state of excitement during the journey, which, to her eager and novelty-loving mind, appeared unconscionably tedious.

Fanny Cameron, their cousin, was, at this time, in her seventeenth year. She had been brought up and educated under the immediate superintendence of her pious parents, and had early been impressed with the vital importance of the "one thing needful," and the efficacy of the Redeemer's blood. She had learnt more of Christianity than the mere name—her belief was clear, simple, and rational; she had fled for refuge to the blood that cleanseth from all sin, and relied for hope and mercy solely on that full, free, and efficacious atonement. The conversations and Christian example of her parents had given a decided bias to her mind, which was never afterwards lost. At first, her mild and gentle nature aspired no higher than to gain the approbation of her beloved parents; but, by degrees, those truths which had been received and acted upon from feelings of love to the creature, were to answer a more exalted

purpose—were to be treasured in her heart from purest love to God—were to be pondered over and dwelt on with reference to her blessed Saviour, and were eventually to be to her “the pearl of great price,” her passport to eternity. She had mingled little with companions of her own age, for, except for a short visit to London annually, Mr. Cameron had constantly resided on his estate in Somersetshire, where Fanny found few young friends of congenial feelings; but, since the announcement of her cousin Catharine’s intended visit, she had looked forward with pleased anticipation to their meeting. She had heard but little of her cousin; the coolness subsisting between the families had precluded any fellowship or communication. She had, indeed, heard, in general terms, that her cousin’s proficiency in all the accomplishments of the age was very great; that her acquirements in the most alluring sciences were the admiration of all her partial friends; that her manners were highly finished and fascinating; in short, that she was looked up to as a model of elegance: but, she had heard nothing of her disposition, her temper, her *heart*; she had not heard what were her acquirements in the knowledge “that maketh wise,” that imparteth life

and immortality; she knew not her cousin's sentiments and feelings on the all-important subject which occupied her own thoughts; but, buoyant with hope, unchilled by disappointment, and, above all things, redolent with charity towards all, that charity which "hopeth all things," she clung to the bright anticipation—though dimmed by so dense a vapour of worldliness—that the feelings which occupied her own breast would find a corresponding reciprocity in her cousin's. But his animating hope was now either to be verified or destroyed; and as Fanny returned the warm embrace of her beautiful cousin, she breathed a secret prayer for the fulfilment of her wishes.

Mr. and Mrs. Cameron received their young relations with warm affection, and kindly welcomed Miss Evelyn, to whom they were no strangers, and, with undissembled sincerity, testified their satisfaction of at length beholding them as their guests.

CHAPTER II.

"The world may hate, and despise
The humble sons of love and peace,
But God will estimate their price,
And bless them with abundant grace."

"The carnal mind is enmity against God,"—*Rom.* viii. 7.

DISENCUMBERED of their travelling dresses, and seated round the plentiful and refreshing tea-table, the happy party appeared to have known each other for ever. With her usual volubility, the fair stranger remarked on all she had seen during the day, the many adventures they had met with, the delays occasioned by restive horses or heavy roads, the imaginary terrors of Miss Evelyn, whose exclamations of fear she exaggerated and derided, and all the other et-ceteras incidental on a long journey in the winter. Taking advantage of a pause in his sister's narration, Edgar remarked,

with a smile, that she had omitted one very important fact, her own unexampled patience during the journey, and the placidity with which she met all these unavoidable impediments. Catharine, laughingly, assented to the justness of his implied reproach, acknowledging that she certainly did find her patience like the courage of the redoubtable Acres, “oozing out;” but her anxiety to meet her cousin Fanny was so great, that, to keep an unruffled brow, while beset with inconveniences, and every moment meeting with fresh occasions of delay, was impossible. In the course of the evening, Catharine expressed her astonishment that she had heard so little of her cousin, even by report; playfully remarked on her beauty, for which she was even then half tempted to quarrel with her, asserting that it had entirely disarranged her own plans for the season. Smiling at Fanny’s puzzled look, Edgar exclaimed, “You are surprised, Fanny, at your cousin’s assertion, but allow me to make clear this seeming incongruity, to which, as a preliminary step, I must inform you that the summary of her ambition, and, perhaps, in this she differs little from the rest of her sex, is universal admiration; to obtain the homage of

crowds, to outshine and distance all competitors, in short, to obtain the suffrages of all in the hemisphere of fashion—for which purpose,” he continued, “behold her, after an age of expectancy, arrived in London, armed *cap-à-pee* for conquest, determined to make a most successful and brilliant *sortie* in the fashionable circle, having previously arranged all her movements for an effective campaign, when, lo! previous to the outset, all her high-flown expectations are annihilated by beholding on the field a rival star, a ‘younger, fairer;’—is it not the fact, Kate?” he enquired, turning to his sister Catharine, who good-humouredly acknowledged it was not far from the truth, though rather hyperbolically stated; while Mr. Cameron remarked, that, though Edgar had given so fanciful a turn to all Catharine’s pre-requisite movements, he trusted the stamp of her mind was far above the paltry gratification of attracting thus. Catharine replied not, and Miss Evelyn pleading fatigue as an excuse for retiring so early, the party separated for the night.

It can not be supposed that Mr. Cameron’s guests could long remain ignorant that they were now associated with a family directly op-

posed to themselves in sentiments and opinions. The tenor of their conversation, so unlike all they had been accustomed to; the unity and harmony that existed among the entire household; but, particularly, the important, but often sadly neglected, custom of family worship, inclined them to believe that the little they had heard about them, as it regarded their singularity and unworldly feelings, was not exaggerated; while Edgar, when talking over the subject with his sister, declaimed, with unbecoming warmth on all their religious observances, declaring that his uncle was a fanatical Methodist, which epithet, he conceived, was the most suitably opprobrious he could use. This unwonted acrimony on Edgar's part, originated in his being, one evening, an involuntary witness of such a scene as he denounced. The evening after their arrival, they were summoned into an apartment where the domestics were all assembled for the purpose of praise and prayer to God. Mr. Cameron took his accustomed seat, and after having sung a hymn, and read and commented on a portion of Holy Writ, he lifted up his voice in prayer. In the name of all the assembled worshippers, he magnified his Maker, bewailed the unworthi-

ness and utter depravity of man, supplicated pardon and salvation through that name alone given among men, whereby we can be saved; entreated for strength and faith, through the Spirit, to have fuller and clearer conceptions of Jchovah's attributes, and more entire dependence on the love of the Saviour. He fervently prayed for the glorious light of conviction to dawn on the minds of those who were still enwrapped in blindness and darkness; that the Holy Spirit of God would awaken them to a perception of their awful state, and bring them into the glorious light and liberty of the Gospel. When the prayer was concluded, and all had risen, Mr. Cameron perceived that one of his auditors was missing. Edgar had, without any clear conception as to why they were summoned, followed the family into the library, where he remained, unwilling, by retiring, to offer so great a slight to his uncle; his attention was at first kept up by the novelty of his situation, but he soon got listless and uneasy, and testified his impatience by a few stifled yawns; but the simple, heartfelt prayer of his uncle had the effect of arousing him to feeling, though very dissonant to that it was calculated and intended to call forth. He was like the

learned Greeks, to whom the simple doctrine of Christianity appeared foolishness; he looked with a feeling almost amounting to contempt on Mr. Cameron, as he continued to bewail and lament the inherent depravity of man's nature, and pointed out the only source by which it was to become pure. His uncle, whom he had hitherto regarded as a man of superior mind and noble faculties, he now looked on either as a puerile fanatic, or a consummate hypocrite; and, unable any longer to command his rising indignation, he arose and repaired to the drawing-room, where his friends found him on their entrance, apparently deeply engaged with a book. To the enquiry of his uncle, as to the cause of his so abrupt departure from their little assembly, Edgar gave an evasive and sullen reply, and unwilling to press the subject on him in a moment of irritation, Mr. Cameron made no comment on it. He saw the state of his nephew's mind, and wisely conjectured that, though Edgar could not be driven to the adoption of principles so exactly at variance with all he had hitherto held and gloried in, still, with all his fancied superiority of intellect, and unbending mind, he discerned a pliant and yielding nature, and trusted he might, by

gentle, and, perhaps, imperceptible methods, be drawn to a knowledge of the truth, and imbibe the sentiments he now so contemptuously opposed. Acting on this principle, Mr. Cameron forebore to argue with Edgar in his then state of mind, or even to notice his disrespectful conduct, but, turning to Miss Evelyn, enquired if she was prepared to commence her intended perambulation of the city on the morrow.

For the next, and several succeeding days, the Evelyn family were busily engaged in viewing all the lions of the great metropolis. Mr. Cameron, who kindly undertook the office of chaperon, directed their attention to every thing calculated to interest them; and, as was usual with her, on every novelty, Catharine's admiration was unbounded. She appeared, at first, as though she would never tire, or could never sufficiently express her unqualified approbation of all she saw and heard; but, alas! for the strange perversity of the human mind, the pleasure it so ardently covets, loses, by gratification, all its fancied charms, familiarity strips it of the beauties which first attracted, and satiety soon changes the too ardent feelings into cool indifference. Such was now the case

with Catharine Evelyn; the wonders and beauties with which she was surrounded, soon appeared, to her restless and variety-loving mind, tame and insipid; her extravagant expressions of delight became more moderate, and soon dwindled into a mere languid assent. But Catharine was destitute of that vital and soul satisfying principle, which could teach its possessor, to look from “nature up to nature’s God;” and to view, in every stupendous and magnificent work of art, the finger that directed the chisel, and the power which shed energy and strength on the whole. Ardent in the gratification of her outward senses, she possessed not that inward gem of holiness, that orient pearl, which could outweigh all the fancied and unstable delights of time and sense; an eager “lover of pleasure rather than of God,” she was estranged from him—nay, she was in direct “enmity against” him. Though surrounded with blessings of which she was every way unworthy, she felt not, she discerned not, the hand that so plentifully showered them. Though sustained and nourished by the bounty of the great original, she acknowledged not his favours, she sought not communion with him, she desired not the light of his countenance.

And, yet, Catharine had not altogether renounced the semblance of religion; and, had she been questioned on the subject, would, doubtless, have been shocked at the supposition that she was acting in open hostility to God. She professed to be a member of the church of Christ, into which, by baptism, she had been outwardly admitted; but, by living in an habitual contradiction to the spirit of the solemn covenant then entered into for her, she had disowned her engagement, she had refused to ratify her oath, and had evidently showed that she had “no act or part in the matter.”

Edgar, to whom the gaieties and splendours of London were no novelties, was not long in renewing his acquaintance with some of his brilliant and profligate companions, in consequence of which his uncle's house was more unfrequented by him, the society he there met with being uncongenial to his taste, by imposing on him an involuntary restraint, and obliging him to listen to the sober, serious conversation of intelligent and spiritual minds, instead of the flimsy sophistry and coarse conviviality of his pernicious associates.

In the mean time, visitors had flocked in to Miss Evelyn and her niece, who were soon

immersed in the busy and time-consuming nothingness of preparation, decoration, and dress, with all the other frivolous et-ceteras which a fashionable life requires. Invitations poured in on these willing recipients, and Catharine, toiling with unusual perseverance through all the exacting demands and comfortless fatigues of such a service, was quickly plunged into the whirlpool of dissipation, and yielded herself a willing servant to the god of this world.

Fanny, who had been included in many of these invitations, was led, both by inclination and principle, to negative every request where dissipation and idleness held sway ; but, though reasonably and steadily opposed to such an unchristian consumption of time, Fanny was no ascetic ; her disposition was lively, and attuned to sociability ; and she enjoyed, with a pleasure commensurate to its deserving, the friendly and rational society in which, with her parents, she occasionally joined. But, oh ! how was her gentle nature pained, by being compelled to witness her cousin's unhallowed pursuits, and the avidity with which they were persevered in ; she, in whom she had fondly anticipated a reciprocity of feeling, a congeniality of soul, a

sharer in every thought of her heart, she now sorrowfully felt, had not one feeling in accordance with her; their minds, pursuits, and joys were as dissimilar as light and darkness, as much at variance as truth and fable. True, she found her cousin more fascinating in manners, more lovely in person, than even the high colouring of partial friends had represented her; she saw her gifted in no ordinary degree, blessed with good temper, affection, and a cultivated mind; the casket, indeed, was brilliantly ornamented and elegantly set; but the gem within was wanting,—that peerless pearl which shines above all the lustre of worldly acquisitions, even the “pearl of great price,” the gift of God’s grace. Without this, of what avail was all her outward adorning?—of what avail, that she was gazed at by an admiring and adulating crowd?—of what avail, that she was extolled for possessing charms over which she had no power? She was still a worthless, senseless worm, an object of piety to the good, a guilty criminal in the eyes of God.

And was Fanny a silent witness of the continuance of her cousin in this soul-ruinous system? Was she satisfied that her own personal relinquishment of such a life was all that was

required of her? Was she contented to fulfil the inspired Apostle's requirement; "to come out from among them, and to be separate," overlooking his no less absolute command "to exhort one another daily"—"to admonish one another; thus showing the practical effects of the indwelling of Christ in the heart? Oh! no, she "had not so learned Christ," nor was any opportunity neglected by her, of representing to her cousin the unsatisfying nature of her ungodly pursuits. But Catharine, spiritually deaf and spiritually blind, "refused to hear the "voice of the charmer;" rejected, with thoughtless indifference, the invitation to wash in the enlightening waters of that living fountain, which is, "opened for sin." Whenever the cousins did meet—which, though living beneath the same roof, was now but seldom, Catharine's mornings being spent in visiting, and her evenings in revellings,—Catharine would always endeavour, in her lively way, to evade or parry off the serious representations and affectionate entreaties of Fanny, styling her, by way of ridicule, a lovely saint, a fairy visionary, a sweet enthusiast, a youthful devotee; whilst she was but perverting these terms, coupled, as they

were, in her own mind, with fanaticism, hypocrisy, and credulity.

To a mind earnestly intent on its everlasting interests, and zealous to draw others from the iniquitous web of worldly contamination, nothing, surely, can be more grievous than the frivolity which would turn the consideration of such thoughts into a subject of pleasantry, and treat with levity and ridicule the all-important subject. But, where reason, and sense, and Scripture, are arrayed on the side of truth, can we wonder that the caviller, the despiser, or the mere worldling—unable, by argument or discussion, to gainsay and bring to nought the momentous reality—should seize on the ever-ready weapons of satire and ridicule, of wit and pleasantry, and wielding them in the face of their adversary, think—or rather endeavour to think—the victory achieved, and every reason efficiently replied to.

To oppose to such the meekness of Christian forbearance with the confidence of Christian zeal, is, perhaps, as difficult a lesson as is taught in the school of Christ, particularly when the assault is perpetrated by those whom our hearts yearn to love, and who, by their endearing tenderness, seem to justify our affection ; and

Fanny, though she ceased not to reprove and warn her cousin, had, daily, need to subdue the feelings of angry impatience, which would sometimes arise, while listening to Catharine's thoughtless invectives against the truths she uttered.

CHAPTER III.

“ Giddy trifter of an hour,
Days to thee are all the same ;
Little care hast thou to count them,
Mindful only of thy game.”

“ Be not conformed to this world.”—*Rom.* xii. 2.

CATHARINE had been now nearly three months in London, the centre of attraction, the gazing star of crowds, the object of universal homage; and yet the desired end, “happiness,” was unobtained. Bewildered in the maze of sophistical felicity, she could neither discern the hope at which she aimed, nor extricate herself from the meshes which a false world had woven around her. Though sometimes constrained, through evident weariness of body and mind, to envy the quiet contentment and unassuming worth of her lovely cousin, the next hour she

would yield a ready ear to the novel invitations of the syren, Pleasure, and willingly bind upon her brows the badge of her debasing servitude.

About this time, a heavy cold, which confined Catharine to the house for some days, gave Fanny an opportunity of again importuning her thoughtless friend to consider her lamentable state. With the earnestness proportioned to the importance of her subject, Fanny was one day endeavouring to fix the wandering attention of her hearer, who, with the most placid indifference, was as listlessly attending, when Mr. Cameron entered the room, to the evident satisfaction of Catharine, who exclaimed, "Dear uncle, you have arrived most opportunely to my relief: Fanny has been for the last hour sitting in judgment on me, and, notwithstanding my very able defence, has at length condemned me."—"Nay, Catharine," interrupted Fanny, "*I* neither judged nor condemned you ;—that were a vain presumption on my part. I showed you that the present tenour of your life was at variance with the word of God, was directly opposed to the spirit of Holy Writ ; but I did so, that you might examine and judge your-

self. Compare yourself by the blessed doctrines of inspiration, and then see the result."

Seating himself by the side of his niece, and taking her hand, Mr. Cameron exclaimed, "Catharine, accuse not Fanny of unjustly condemning you, for, be convinced, she has long had your best interests at heart, and that every thing she has said has been spoken in the language of love, and with a view to your eternal happiness. Could you contemplate your own ruined state by nature, and the dreadful consequences accruing to your soul from your insatiable and persevering pursuit after perishable pleasures, you would be equally ready to condemn yourself; you would then feel satisfied that you are not living as a being should, who has a soul to be saved, a Saviour to seek, an eternity to live through;—as a being should, who is to be accountable for the deeds done in the body, when this fleeting world, and all its lying vanities, is consumed;—as a being should, who is to be judged, not by the standard of human wisdom, not even by the far-exceeding knowledge of the angels of light, but by the unerring decision of Omnipotence. Think, my dear Catharine, what account can you give of the last three months. Have you spent one

day, nay, one hour, in the service of your Creator? I am serious, my dear girl, and, doubtless, you think me severe; but is not your eternal salvation very dear to me? and can I unconcernedly see you thus walking in the vanity of your unregenerate heart, in the path of ruin and irremediable destruction?"

Terrified by the strong language of her uncle, Catharine exclaimed, "Dearest uncle, what terms you use!—'ruin,' 'destruction,'—surely they are unqualified; have I transgressed so deeply, that you should apply such to me?"—"You have, Catharine," returned Mr. Cameron: "every child of Adam has transgressed; so depraved is the natural heart, and so much at enmity with its God, that even the regenerate man—that is, the man who, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, has been brought to see his own deformity, whose heart is devoted to his Creator, who relies entirely on his Redeemer for salvation, who clings to the cross as his only refuge from death and misery, who has been called of God, and purified by the Spirit—even this man, I repeat, must, while in the flesh, be constrained to exclaim, by reason of the still adhering infirmities of that flesh, 'Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall

deliver me from the body of this death!’ And, while he ‘thanks God that the victory can be obtained in and through Jesus Christ,’ he still feels, at times, the lingering workings of corruption, for which he has daily need to entreat forgiveness of his God. If such a being knows and acknowledges himself to be a sinner, how lamentably awful must be the state of those who are still living in rebellion and enmity against Jehovah,—who yield a ready obedience to other gods,—who swear fealty to the ‘god of this world,’—that sin-loving prince of darkness, who binds his captives in chains harder than adamant, steels their hearts against their mercy-loving Maker, and plunges them in sin and perdition. What, my dear child, must be their portion, but ‘ruin’ and ‘destruction?’—“Oh! uncle,” exclaimed Catharine, “how you terrify me! what appalling words! what a wretched creature I must appear in your sight, if these are your real sentiments.” “Sinful and foolish as your present conduct must necessarily appear, even in my sight,” returned Mr. Cameron, “think of the tenfold blackness in which it is manifest to the eyes of Him in whose sight the very heavens are not pure. But,” continued Mr. Cameron, “you

look displeased and dissatisfied, you seem to regard me in the light of a hard censor; tell me, Catharine, do you feel that any thing I have said, or any terms I have used, might, with justice, be applied to the race of pleasure you have run since your arrival in London? or have you formed a higher estimate of your own character than the word of God justifies, and weighed in a more prejudiced and faulty balance the merits of your time-consuming enjoyments?"—"Uncle," said Catharine, "I must be perfectly candid with you, and, forgive me, when I say, I can neither understand you, or subscribe to all you have said; for, while I acknowledge that I come not up to your standard of moral excellence, as far as regards that entire devotedness to religion which you appear to consider of such ultimate importance, neither can I perceive any resemblance to myself in the character you so fearfully contrasted with it."—"Of that I am convinced, Catharine," returned Mr. Cameron; "it has ever been one of the characteristics of the carnal mind to close its eyes against its own deformity; its natural inaptitude in the perception of moral evil is still more obstructed by the tenacity with which it adheres to the

principle of self love, by the means of which a delusive calm is shed around the unhappy possessor, and the whole being becomes enwrapped in darkness.”—“But it does not necessarily follow,” said Catharine, “that I must be in the swift road to ruin, because I am naturally fond of gaiety and the world; else,” added she, smiling, “I had better at once borrow an anchorite’s dress, and betake myself to some remote solitude ‘far out of humanity’s reach.’”—“The habiliments of an anchorite would ill become my fashionable niece,” returned Mr. Cameron, taking up, as he spoke, a corner of the costly shawl in which, as an invalid, she had enveloped herself; “but,” added he, “the religion of the Gospel calls for no such sacrifices; Christianity holds up no forbidding and gloomy aspect. In opposition to such, the religion of the Saviour is calculated to dispel all moroseness and ascetical severity, it is a religion of love, and peace, and happiness. But, oh! my child, banish the idea that you are safe, because you have committed no open or flagrant acts of enormity; you are not safe, unless you live by ‘faith in the Son of God,’ and, that you do not, your present thoughtless existence testifies.”

Catharine, though unconvinced, remained silent, and Mr. Cameron continued, "My dear Catharine, I would ask you one question with the sincerest affection,—Do you ever study the Bible,—that blessed record of God's will, which reveals to us the way of everlasting life?"

The colour mounted into Catharine's cheeks, but it was rather the flush of angry impatience at the close questioning of her uncle, than shame for her ignorance as to the concerns of her soul; evading her uncle's interrogatory, she replied, in a tone of hauteur, "Really, I have much reason to be elated at the flattering opinion formed of me by my friends here: were others to see the distorted portrait but now so admirably finished, methinks they would scarcely find a trace of the Catharine Evelyn they formerly knew;" so saying, she rose from her seat as if to terminate this unwelcome and disagreeable discussion, and approached the window with an air of determined indifference. "Oh! Catharine," exclaimed Fanny, "how unkind, how unjust, thus to return the affectionate solicitude of papa; for what motive could possibly influence your best friends in representing to you your danger, but an earnest

principle of self love, by the means of which a delusive calm is shed around the unhappy possessor, and the whole being becomes enwrapped in darkness.”—“But it does not necessarily follow,” said Catharine, “that I must be in the swift road to ruin, because I am naturally fond of gaiety and the world; else,” added she, smiling, “I had better at once borrow an anchorite’s dress, and betake myself to some remote solitude ‘far out of humanity’s reach.’” —“The habiliments of an anchorite would ill become my fashionable niece,” returned Mr. Cameron, taking up, as he spoke, a corner of the costly shawl in which, as an invalid, she had enveloped herself; “but,” added he, “the religion of the Gospel calls for no such sacrifices; Christianity holds up no forbidding and gloomy aspect. In opposition to such, the religion of the Saviour is calculated to dispel all moroseness and ascetical severity, it is a religion of love, and peace, and happiness. But, oh! my child, banish the idea that you are safe, because you have committed no open or flagrant acts of enormity; you are not safe, unless you live by ‘faith in the Son of God,’ and, that you do not, your present thoughtless existence testifies.”

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desire for your happiness.” “My dear Fanny” said Mr. Cameron, “a time, I trust, will arrive, when your cousin will think differently on the subject; when her views and desires will be brought in accordance with God’s word; till then, it were absurd to resent the opposition she manifests towards the truth; to truth she has ever been little accustomed, and, I doubt not, finds it now harsh and unpleasant; but, notwithstanding, it is the imperative duty of her *Christian* friends to urge it on her acceptance, and warn her continually of the hazard she incurs by its rejection, ‘whether she bears, or whether she forbears.’” Catharine extended her hand: “Uncle,” she exclaimed, “forgive my foolish impatience! I own my error, and feel conscious how unworthy a return I showed for your kindness, unpalatable though it appeared; am I forgiven?”—“Assuredly, my child,” returned her affectionate uncle, warmly pressing her hand; “but, oh! Catharine, dismiss not the subject from your mind as though it concerned you not; it is fraught with importance of the highest magnitude; therefore, as you value your soul’s safety, do not shun its contemplation.”

Catharine promised, but it was with the feelings of one who is required to study some subject of minor interest, and whose only anxiety at present is to dismiss, as speedily as possible, the intruding thought. Visitors were announced, and those solemn truths that even now sounded in her ears, were soon expelled by a superabundant influx of fashionable gossip, while the eagerness with which Catharine entered into the lively colloquy, proved, but too truly, on what her affections were set.

But, to do her justice, she did endeavour, for a few days, to recall to mind her uncle's conversation, and frequently introduced the subject when alone with Fanny or Mrs. Cameron, who failed not to follow up the impressions they trusted she had received; but on the removal of the slight illness that had confined her to the house, Catharine forgot her uncle's admonitions, her aunt's tender solicitude, and her lovely cousin's tearful expostulations, and appeared even more completely engaged in her former ephemeral occupations.

Miss Evelyn and Edgar had both left town, the former on a visit to a friend at some distance from London, the latter, who had abandoned his intention of visiting the continent,

had betaken himself, for a short time, to his estate in Yorkshire ; but their departure offered no impediment to the prosecution of Catharine's career of dissipation, and each succeeding day was witness to her persevering zeal in the service of vanity and fashion.

Mrs. Cameron had been, for some time, in a very delicate state of health ; she complained of little pain, but it was evident, to the watchful eye of her fond husband, that some fatal malady had laid its iron finger on her, though the hectic cheek and brightened eye might, to a less interested observer, betoken health and safety. The physician who had attended her for the last two months, had, at first, been very sanguine in his hopes of success ; but, when anxiously entreated by Mr. Cameron not to deceive him with respect to his wife's state, he acknowledged that all hope of her ultimate recovery was fallacious, though he anticipated no speedy dissolution. From that hour, with resigned sorrow, Mr. Cameron contemplated his bereavement ; and, though the loved object of his affections lingered many months, and the treacherous but certain messenger of the grave assumed, at times, a less fearful aspect, and health would appear again to smile upon the

drooping form, still her husband shared not in the hope it seemed to promise, for he felt too truly that the withering hand was not removed. But within his own breast were these hope-destroying forebodings locked; he would not, needlessly, give pain to the gentle spirit of his child, whose earthly bliss seemed bound up in her parents. Change of air had been recommended, and the air of Woodville, their peaceful and happy home, was deemed, by the faculty, the most beneficial and advantageous, associated as it was, in the mind of the invalid, with all the tender delights of life, and their removal thither was arranged to take place in the course of a few weeks.

The thoughtless Catharine, who had been pursuing her race of gaiety, regardless of the solemn admonitions addressed to her by her uncle, alarmed at the increasing debility of her aunt, whom she tenderly loved, and the consequent affliction of her cousin, felt her sensibility strongly called forth, and considerably resigned many of her parties of pleasure, either to assist Fanny in her anxious attendance on her mother, or to endeavour, by her liveliness and playful manner, to amuse and gratify the invalid.

One morning that Fanny had been detained

with her mother unusually late, she was gratified, on entering the breakfast parlour, to find Catharine had anticipated her, and was seated at breakfast with Mr. Cameron, both so deeply engaged in conversation that they scarcely heeded her entrance; Catharine was repeating to her uncle all she had heard Edgar express relative to the singularity and strictness of his principles, savouring, in his estimation, so much of enthusiasm and absurdity, fettering the lofty aspirations of man's nature, and forcing him to bow down with unreserved obedience to a code of tenets equally puerile as fanatic. "Poor Edgar," said Mr. Cameron; "he seems obstinately resolved to close his eyes against the truth; he has imbibed unhappy and detrimental prejudices against religion, and seems more inclined to reject Christianity altogether than to receive it in simplicity; and what said our Saviour—'except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Pride was never made for man; 'the lofty looks of man shall be humbled down, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted.' Oh! how did Edgar's conduct grieve me while under my roof, glorying as he did in

his sinful career, and rejecting with contempt all my earnest pleadings and forcible reasonings, as if beneath his notice ; his sister, too," he continued, seeing Catharine moved by his manner, " his sister, too, unmindful of eternity, walking on this earth without one thought beyond the time-consuming frivolities of the present moment, one hope beyond the grave." —" Uncle," said Catharine, after a pause, " you seem to think much worse of me than I deserve ; you make no distinction between the openly profane and licentious sinner—whom you can not more heartily despise than I do—and one who innocently participates in the unforbidden enjoyments of life. Now, acknowledge, is not that *rather* too strict."

" I will answer you, my dear child, from the unerring word of God," replied Mr. Cameron, taking from his pocket a small bible. " In our Lord's admirable and comprehensive sermon on the Mount, he thus admonishes us ; ' No man can serve two masters ; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. ~~He~~ We can not serve God and mammon ;' and, in a subsequent address, he plainly declares, ' he that is not with me is against me.' This truth all his

immediate followers forcibly inculcated. St. James writes thus: 'the friendship of the world is enmity against God; and, listen to the words of the beloved disciple—'if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;' and St. Paul, in all his epistles, expressly shows, that they only 'are Christ's, who have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts:' now, Catharine," continued Mr. Cameron, "having in mind these solemn truths, just contemplate, for a moment, the tenour of your past life, and estimate its true value by a comparison with this standard. This is the only safe criterion by which to judge ourselves; the only method of ascertaining our real state, of discovering whether we are among the few favoured individuals who, through the grace of Almighty God, have been enabled to advance in that straight and narrow path, which leadeth to life, or have, with the multitude, entered in at the wide gate, whose end is death."

Mr. Cameron had ceased, but Catharine replied not; she felt awed by the earnestness of his manner, but had no real perception as to the ultimate importance of the subject; many things here uncle had said were new and perfectly unintelligible to her; she looked puzzled

and embarrassed, and, at length, requested her uncle to lend her the little Bible from which he had read, previously marking the passages he had but now quoted. This simple request seemed greatly to affect Mr. Cameron; he placed the open book in her hand, pointing to the different verses which had already been marked: “Catharine!” he exclaimed, with evident emotion, “this inestimable little treasure was the parting gift of your own dear mother; greatly did she prize it; and, oh! I fondly trust the constant study of it was blessed to her immortal soul, leading her to a knowledge of her Saviour, and imparting to her life, and joy, and happiness; while she dwelt within this earthly tabernacle, this was her solace in every affliction—her familiar guide and friend—her ocean of hope amidst the quicksands of an ungodly world; receive it, therefore, my dear Catharine,” he added, “as from your beloved parent, marked by her own hand to draw her much-loved child from the entanglements of a sin-fraught and alluring world, and to display to her the mercies of a too long neglected God.”

Catharine received the gift with sensations till then unfelt; the mention of her mother’s name, of whose worth she seemed to have an

intuitive perceptibility, her uncle's evident effort to appear composed, and the unaffected sympathy of her cousin, added to the solemn words previously uttered by Mr. Cameron, deeply affected her, and, pressing the precious gift to her lips, she burst into tears. Unable to overcome an emotion so new, she left the room, and, in the solitude of her own chamber, a fervent prayer, the first perhaps her lips had uttered, burst from her, as, kneeling down she entreated the Almighty to make her such as her departed parent was. With feelings of no common delight her ever anxious friends saw that Mrs. Evelyn's well read Bible was now frequently sought and studied with apparent interest, by her daughter; the striking and forcible passages marked by the hand of love, were read again and again, her uncle was frequently appealed to, and to one unskilled in the knowledge of the heart's deceitfulness, Catharine's manner would warrant the assumption, that she was acquiring a daily interest in matters hitherto overlooked.

How sad is the thought, that feelings, short-lived and ~~transitory~~ transitory, emanating, it may be, either from a constitutional susceptibility, a sudden emotion arising from the earnest pleadings of affection, or, perhaps, a glance of ter-

rific wonder at our own natural deformity, is oft regarded by the inexperienced, as savouring of true and genuine godliness; or that a head knowledge of scripture truth stamps vitality on the principles, and testifies a saving faith: but, sad as is the consideration, experience has witnessed its reality, and poor Catharine, listening alone to the dictates of vanity and self love, regarded her recently excited feelings as the result of real conviction and genuine holiness. Enthusiastic in disposition, she appeared now emulous only to imitate the lovely example of her cousin, and, as she had now become more domesticated with the family, she had frequent opportunities of marking Fanny's uniform consistency, the unaffected simplicity of her faith, and its practical effects on her life and conversation. Justly attributing these blessed results to the spirit-stirring power of religion, Catharine anticipated similar effects in her own case, and, ere she had learnt the first necessary, though painful, lesson, in the school of Christ, that of forcibly feeling her own wretched and undone condition, she had realized in her own mind an interest on high, and appeared to trace with certainty her path to blessedness.

CHAPTER IV.

" A pilgrim in a weary land
Man tarries but a night.

" No second spring shall e'er revive
The ashes of the urn."

"For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.—*James*, iv. 14.

IT was now the commencement of April, and the lovely Spring, ushered in amidst smiles and tears, effused around her wonted charms; all nature was renewed; the balmy and invigorating air breathed life and freshness, and the light fleeting clouds, shading the blue ethereal canopy, shed their kindly moisture on earth's opening sweets. Even the stunted and barren looking trees that ornamented the square occupied by Mr. Cameron assumed, in defiance of fog, and smoke, and dust, an appear-

ance of life and cheerfulness; the light, refreshing green burst from its murky tenement, and opened into leafy beauty beneath the kindling eye of a creative God; so germinates the soul of man, when touched by the revivifying grace of God. Cleaving naturally to the earth, the soul seems lost amidst the blackening shades of unbelief and sin; opposed to the light, it clings with fond credulity to its deadened state, and appears to challenge any power to change its nature; but the spiritual dew descends on the unfruitful soil, the sun of righteousness dispels the rancorous exhalations which impeded the soul's ascent, and, overcoming the powers of darkness, bursts the bonds of sin, and leads forth the trembling captive, whispering, in every passing breeze, a hope, full of immortality.

It was this ineffable desire, this hope, full of immortality, that enabled Mrs. Cameron, in the strength of her God, patiently to endure her present chastening, and bow with unrepining submission to a dispensation which she felt was sent in mercy; it was this soul-comforting hope that taught her, while the house of her "earthly tabernacle was consuming daily," to look "to a better and a blessed home," and

“to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Here now Catharine had daily opportunities of witnessing the holy triumph of a perfect faith, in the heart of a believer on the verge of eternity, and of contemplating the same heaven-directed principle governing the sorrowing friends. Here she saw the effects of real piety in the uncomplaining grief of Fanny, and she felt *then*, (though subsequent events proved how short-lived was the feeling,) that to possess this inward gem of holiness, the sacrifice of all her former pleasures would be light. She became now Fanny's constant companion, rarely quitting her aunt's apartment, whose holy conversation she seemed greatly to prize; resolutely refusing the importunate solicitations of her fashionable friends, whose amusements she now deprecated with unsparing censure. So decided a change of conduct might sanction the hope, that it was the evidence of a change of heart; but Mr. Cameron had some internal misgivings as to the strength and purity of his niece's faith, and that, though she had received the word with joy, as the eager recipients on the rock, yet, having no firm root, she would endure but for

a while, and in time of temptation fall away; these fears he communicated to Mrs. Cameron, who, having now abundant opportunities of conversing with Catharine, urged on her, constantly, the necessity of a full and entire surrender of her heart to God, who, being a jealous God, will spurn with holy indignation a divided service; while she represented to her, in strong and forcible language, that if she desired to embrace the self-denying service of God, she must not only strive to subdue her naturally corrupt inclinations, but her most besetting sin must be crucified, and that not by the might or power of man, but by the spirit of God; she showed her the unsatisfying nature of a mere outward conformity to the will of God, and the fatal result of calling, “Lord, Lord!” and not doing the things he commands. To all this advice and instruction Catharine ever turned a willing ear, and Mrs. Cameron, who beheld her daily increasing anxiety for the truth, and her wish to be directed by the Christian’s rule of right, was soon divested of many fears on her account, and looked forward with hope to the stability and constancy of her faith.

The day was at length fixed for their return

to Woodville, and Catharine, though she had previously promised Miss Evelyn to accompany her in an excursion of pleasure, had now determined otherwise, and eagerly accepted the warm invitation of her uncle, to spend the summer with them. With the restlessness habitual to her, she had already planned all the good she hoped to be enabled to do when there, and seemed burning with impatience to hear and be acquainted with her uncle's much valued young friend, the pastor of Woodville; her feelings were thus excited, and expectation at its height, when the events connected with Edgar's return to London, without producing a revolution in her feelings, induced her to relinquish this promised pleasure, and pursue a path replete with danger.

Absorbed in reflections of a heavenly tendence, Mrs. Cameron was seated, towards the close of a Sabbath day, at the drawing-room window. She beheld the sun's farewell of unusual loveliness, and saw that all nature was participating in grateful acknowledgment for its kindly influence; but she felt that its renovating beams brought no renewal of bodily strength to her,—she felt that she would soon be called to pass that bourne from whence no

traveller returns; and, as she raised her eyes upon the blue expanse above them, the swift-winged messenger of fancy took the reins, and transported her amidst the choral multitude who inhabit the bright arch on high, turning *her* harp to sing the never ceasing song. Mr. Cameron and Catharine had gone to evening service, and the gentle, watchful Fanny, seated near her mother, was anxiously observing her pale and attenuated countenance, illuminated, as it now was, by a holy rapture; the sun was gradually and sweetly declining, and its parting rays fell direct on the invalid, enshrining her as in a halo of light. The expression of her mother's countenance looked so unearthly, that Fanny became alarmed, and instinctively placed her hand within her parent's; the soft familiar touch dispelled the heavenly vision, and recalled again her thoughts to earth. Gazing with maternal fondness on the fair being who had thus checked her soaring imagination, Mrs. Cameron pointed to a low stool, Fanny's accustomed seat, at her feet; where, opening her Bible, she continued to read for some time, interrupted occasionally by some beautiful remark from her auditor. Mrs. Cameron had clasped one of her child's fair hands in her own

emaciated fingers, and was unconsciously occupied in twisting the glossy ringlets that rested on her knees, while, with an emotion almost overpowering, Fanny read from the book of life. They were at length interrupted by a loud knocking at the hall door, and, with evident surprise, they beheld Edgar Evelyn announced.

Struck with the pallid and wasted appearance of his good aunt, whom, notwithstanding her non-conformity to the world's pernicious vanities, he could not but love and respect,—Edgar remained for a moment motionless, unable to advance. He was prepared, by Catharine's letters, to find her an invalid; but the sorrowful expression of astonishment depicted on his countenance, showed that he expected not so material a change. Mrs. Cameron immediately perceived the effect her altered appearance had on her nephew. Reaching out her hand, "Edgar," she exclaimed, "you did not anticipate that I was hurrying so fast towards my journey's end. I have, indeed, made rapid strides since last I saw you; but, blessed be God! the journey is not one of toil and pain, the stages are short and easy, and the prospect heavenly." Edgar seated himself, but continued to gaze on his aunt with evident concern. "We know not, Ed-

gar," added Mrs. Cameron, "what a day may bring forth."—"True, dear madam," he replied, "as my present sad surprise testified, but Catharine prepared me not for so visible a change; she even intimated, in her last letter, that you proposed leaving town?"

"Yes," returned Mrs. Cameron, "if God permits, we propose leaving this for Woodville, on Wednesday."

"What! in your present weakened state? will it not be at great risk?"—"The physicians seem to think otherwise," replied Mrs. Cameron; "and as I have a strong desire to end my days in that spot that witnessed the enjoyment of all my earthly comforts, I flatter myself that the excitement will support me; besides, we shall make it a three days' journey, so that the fatigue will be greatly lessened."

"And Catharine accompanies us," remarked Fanny.—"I scarcely think she will," said Edgar, "for I have brought with me a most pressing invitation for her to pass the summer in Brighton: her aunt is evidently hurt at Catharine's late neglect, and the old lady reminds her *now* of her promise to spend the next few months with her; the refusal to comply with which, will, I fear, occasion a sad breach be-

tween them.—“ Oh, Edgar!” exclaimed Fanny, “ surely you will not urge her to leave us now: you know not what a real comfort she is to mamma. Do not, I entreat you, deprive us now of her dear society.”

“ I came fraught with instructions, and, I may say, intentions to that effect,” returned Edgar: “ but, believe me, if she can in any way be accessory to your comfort or happiness, or afford one feeling of pleasure to my dear aunt, I would not press, or even desire, her departure.”

“ Thank you, dear Edgar,” replied Mrs. Cameron: “ but I should grieve much to be the occasion of any coolness between Catharine and her fondly attached aunt, and should consider myself blameably selfish did I allow her to incur displeasure on my account. I fear we must part.”—“ Oh! Mamma,” said Fanny, “ for her own sake, do not say any thing to Catharine, that might incline her to leave us; surely, you will leave it to her own choice?”—“ Undoubtedly,” said Edgar, “ she shall herself decide, and I think I may engage to make her peace with the old lady, who is not wont to be very inexorable.” Fanny’s countenance brightened. “ That being the case, I doubt not we shall all be satisfied,” she exclaimed. Mr. Cameron and

Catharine now entered, and were agreeably surprised to find Edgar before them. They were not long seated, when Catharine, impatient to impart to her brother her newly acquired taste for religion, enquired of him when he had made his journey into town. “But now I arrived,” he replied: “*your* friend, Sir James Newton, acted as my charioteer, with his usual inimitable grace.”—“To-day, Edgar?” said Catharine, as if in evident surprise.—“Yes, to-day,” he repeated: “is there any thing so very unintelligible in the word?”

Catharine now, with more warmth than discretion, animadverted on the sinfulness of thus spending a Sabbath; and, by her frequent quotations from Scripture, proved that she had at least acquired some degree of head knowledge, while she lamented, in very strong language, her brother’s inadequate perception of the purport of God’s blessed day.

Though prepared, by the tenor of her late letters, to expect some change in the sentiments and opinions of his restless-minded sister, which expectation was confirmed by a few words dropped by Fanny, previous to Catharine’s entrance, Edgar heard, with visible astonishment, this premature exordium, gazing,

meanwhile, in mute surprise on his youthful admonisher. The curl of his upper lip testified unequivocally his scepticism as to the radicalness of this sudden conversion, while he ironically replied, " Really, Kate, I'm concerned Sir James did not make his bow here this evening:—t'were pity to waste so much eloquence on an unworthy brother; a lecture on Sabbath breaking from the all-accomplished Miss Catharine Evelyn would have been a perfect *miraculum*, and the gentle youth, who is quite as novelty-loving a personage as my animated sister, would have been no unprofitable listener; reserve a few notes, however, for to-morrow, for assuredly he will then expect an audience." Catharine reddened as Edgar continued his sarcastic remarks; at length, interrupting him, she exclaimed, " such taunting language I heed not, Edgar, for I have lately learnt to view many things in a totally different light, and the opinions of the world at large, or of some particular individuals, shall never alter my sentiments."

Grieved at the ill-judged zeal of his niece, and her subsequent self-confident assertion, Mr. Cameron gently reminded her, that such a positive assurance was blameable, and that

she should never forget that, in her own unassisted strength, she could do nothing.

“ Most certainly, my dear uncle,” replied Catharine, “ I acknowledge that; but, surely, it can not be deemed presumptuous (when impressed with a conscious feeling of in-dwelling grace) to assert a firm persuasion of adhering to the truth.”

“ I am grieved to perceive, my dear niece,” returned Mr. Cameron, “ that you have yet to learn that the consciousness of our own weakness and ignorance is the beginning of heavenly wisdom, and that a distrust of our own understanding is the greatest preservative against falling.”—“ But how can we distrust a self-evident knowledge?” said Catharine.

“ We must distrust ourselves, my child,” replied Mr. Cameron, “ if we would be preserved to the end. If we rely on God, to be of any avail, it must be an entire reliance, an undivided trust; consequently, self-dependence vanishes. It is a fatal quality, and more to be dreaded because the destructive poison lurks deep, and often unperceived. ‘ Be not high-minded, but fear.’ ”—“ I grant all you say, dear uncle,” said Catharine, “ and yet I can not accuse myself of groundless confidence in my

resolute assertion of constancy, for are not our own peculiar feelings better known to ourselves than they can possibly be to others?"

"Undoubtedly," replied her uncle; "but as we know that, 'the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,' how can we place reliance on so unstable a foundation? How can we be confident that, while we are thus buoying up ourselves with the assurance of our own fixedness in holiness, we are not carried away by some dazzling, though unsatisfying, meteor of our own creating, till, resting on the strength of our boasted capabilities, and consequently limiting God's omnipotence, we make a God of ourselves, 'and worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator.'"

Edgar, who had been a silent and attentive listener of his uncle's just rebuke to the ardent, inconsistent Catharine, now interrupted him, by his usual unqualified dissent to this doctrine of man's depravity; urging the unreasonableness of compelling man blindly to bow to the requisitions set forth by such tenets as his uncle promulgated, and enquiring, in a tone of defiance, where, in this system, did its compilers place man's high intellectual endowments, his reasoning faculties,

his capacious mind, his unlimited imagination, his gigantic perceptions? In how degrading a light did human nature appear, when required to harmonize with such a theory, where man must be content to reject the lofty aspirations of his glorious nature, consenting to become a puerile imitator and follower of a mind-debasing creed, a machine in the hands of others, a spiritless associate, a mere automation!

Mr. Cameron looked greatly displeased, and was evidently much grieved at this acrimonious and disrespectful language, so arrogantly uttered; and reprehended Edgar, in no very gentle terms, for his obstinate opposition to the truth, declaring to him the ruinous consequence, of his continuance in such a sad delusive system of philosophy as that on which he prided himself; that, while endeavouring to display the loftiness of his imagination by a decided contempt of the gospel of the Saviour, he was seduced by a false complacency, and inflated by an impious pride, supported on the basis of infidelity, and robbing the eternal God of his glorious perfections.

Edgar was silent; he saw that his uncle was hurt and disappointed, and he knew that he

had cause for it, as, previous to his late excursion into the country, Mr. Cameron had been indefatigable in his endeavours, by God's assistance, to dispel the illusory structure in which his nephew seemed to glory, and he had hoped that many of Edgar's prejudices against the gospel dispensation had been overcome. He had noticed his eagerness to enter on religious discussions; and, though it often appeared that it was to oppose his uncle's arguments, or to display his own infidel principles, still Mr. Cameron observed, with much satisfaction, that Edgar, ere long, was impressed with less aversive feelings towards the simplicity of the gospel scheme of salvation; and, as he conceived this to be one very desirable step towards the wished-for end, he was encouraged to persevere, trusting the issue to the wisdom of an over-ruling God.

It is certain, that the uniform consistency of Mr. Cameron's conduct, with his professions of religion, and the strict propriety he exhibited in all his dealings, together with his uncompromising principles, had inclined Edgar to look with less abhorrence on the opinions of his single-minded relative; but his subsequent journey to the North, by depriving him of his

good uncle's conversation and powerful example, had, in a measure, checked his desire for further knowledge regarding a system hitherto held by him at so low an estimate, and his former unjust antipathy had revived.

Notwithstanding this, Edgar respected his uncle, and, conscious how ungracious a return he manifested towards him, in the unrepressed avowal of his own unbelieving principles, he checked the further expression of his feelings on the subject, and turned to his sister, to acquaint her with his aunt's wishes and expectations relative to her promised visit to Brighton.

Catharine unhesitatingly refused to fulfil her promise, but without assigning any cause for so doing, until pressed by Edgar to give her reasons for her non-compliance, when she acknowledged, that independent of the affliction her separation from Fanny and her dear aunt would necessarily occasion her, she could not, conscientiously, associate with declared enemies to the truth, in which light she was now, unwillingly, obliged to consider all her former friends.

Edgar enquired if her new creed taught her to relinquish all duties that militated against her own wishes? to which Catharine replied

with an asperity little in accordance with the gentle forbearing faith she professed, and continued still firmly resolute in her opposition. Edgar looked at her doubtingly, but forbore any attempt to change her determination, for the evidently precarious state of his aunt made him more desirous that Catharine should adhere to her expressed resolution, though he could not but think, that, in so doing, she was merely acting in conformity to the will of others, and that this resistance of her own desires was but the effect of consummate dissimulation.

Glowing with redoubled confidence, she now turned to her uncle for his approval of her conduct. "Catharine," said he, "I heartily rejoice in your determination in relinquishing the gay scenes in which you must inevitably have mixed in a visit to Brighton at this season of the year; but it is neither to retain the pleasure of your society on my own account,—which pleasure I now more particularly prize,—neither to gratify the wishes of your aunt and cousin, but for your own sake, that I feel so gratified. The contagion of bad example is imperceptibly imbibed, even by those who have styled, and, perhaps, felt themselves

Christians; first, by trivial deviations from the narrow path, through dread of appearing singular; or, perhaps, to act merely in accordance with the wishes of friends, or the reigning fashion, while, in reality, their secret and corrupt inclinations are gratified by it. Many a novice in religion has been led astray by a reliance on his own fancied strength:—and then how is the cause of religion withered? how is the Gospel brought into disrepute?—for the greatest hindrance to religion has ever been found in the contempt thrown on it by mere nominal professing Christians.”

Strange as it may appear, these remarks of her uncle, though calculated to strengthen and confirm Catharine in her resolve, and to impress her with feelings of humility and less self-dependence, were productive of very different effects. She perceived that her uncle was still distrustful of her faith; that he had little reliance on her boasted strength; and she became suddenly impressed with an anxious desire to make trial of her stability, and convince her uncle how groundless were his fears, how unjust his suspicions. But how to compass this end was the grand difficulty. After having so pertinaciously persisted in her

former determination, she was aware how justly she would subject herself to the charge of inconsistency, should she swerve from it: but the ardent desire of acquiring a name for her zealous adherence to the cause of religion; to be considered inaccessible to the approaches of corruption, even in the midst of the fiery ordeal of dissipated society; to view the sweeping vortex, without being contaminated by its overwhelming spray, without feeling its heart-chilling effects; and, above all, to silence, by this means, her uncle's doubts as to her stability; these counterbalanced, in her estimation, all uneasy feelings on the score of inconsistency, and during the remainder of the evening she meditated the most effectual method of indulging this new desire. A much wished-for end in view will quickly find means to remove or overcome intervening obstacles, and Catharine readily planned the most feasible and least inconsistent method of attaining her wish, compromising the affair with her friends by suggesting, that, as she was resolved to spend the summer with them in Woodville, and, consequently, could not see her aunt Evelyn for some time, it would, perhaps, be more prudent, rather than wound her feelings by so de-

cided a rejection of her invitation, to go herself to Brighton, and plead her excuse for not remaining with her aunt during the summer; her stay, of course, would be very limited, as she hoped they would scarcely be settled again in Woodville before she would join them. Mr. Cameron shook his head, and Catharine smilingly enquired an interpretation of the movement. Mr. Cameron gravely replied, that when we pray not to be led into temptation, we are but mocking our Maker if we wilfully embrace any enticement of Satan; and when we willingly seek to be surrounded by worldly incitements and examples, and court danger through a deceptive feeling of self-dependence, how can we, consistently, ask God's grace to preserve us? 'The temerity of our conduct will be visited on our own head, and our presumptuousness will receive its just guerdon. Catharine disclaimed all such motives as her uncle seemed to impute to this sudden change of determination; she could not, or rather would not, meet his views on the subject; and, notwithstanding his reasoning, and Fanny's fond entreaties, she persisted in her design of spending a few days in Brighton, previous to her anticipated visit to Woodville

Accordingly, on the morrow, when Edgar's gay and fashionable friend arrived, Catharine delighted him by the intelligence of her intention to leave town immediately for Brighton, (whither the gallant baronet was bound,) who signified, in suitable terms, the happiness this communication conveyed, and having understood that Edgar and his sister proposed starting in a few hours, he requested and obtained permission to join them, when the vacillating Catharine, unsuspecting of her own natural deficiency of faith or patience, took leave of her friends, exulting in her self-imposed trial.

Mr. Cameron saw her depart with a foreboding sigh, and almost blamed himself for not having exerted more authority over her, in order to withhold her from this great temptation. She aimed at perfection, and that perfection to be obtained by human exertions and fleshly powers. Alas! she was widely separated from the simplicity of a Christian's faith, who feels that, by the works of the law, no flesh can be justified in the eyes of a purity-loving God; her morbid sensibility discerned not the grand, the effective, the all-satisfying scheme of redemption, firmly and irrevocably sealed by the precious blood-shedding of the

Son of God. She knew not the preciousness of her immortal soul, the salvation of which could be obtained by no less a sacrifice than the unmerited sufferings of a Saviour, Christ Jesus. Were it possible for sinful, miserable mortals to expiate their own sins, or procure eternal life through their own offerings, or gifts, or blood, or in any way giving a helping hand to the saving of their souls, why then should the eternal God leave his mansions of blessedness, and, clothed in the garb of mortality, willingly submit to the degrading conflict he endured on earth, should “make his soul an offering for sin,” should be weighed down under the infirmities of our nature—pressed by hunger—tempted by Satan—despised by his own—wounded and bruised, and put to grief, bearing the iniquities of a guilty world, from the lowly manger that cradled the infant Immanuel, to the degrading cross on which the expiatory sacrifice was consummated. Stupendous act of grace! How can a creature of dust and impurity dare to urge a plea, or found a hope of salvation, that is not wholly and entirely resting on *Him* who so severely paid the penalty to appease the just wrath of heaven’s Majesty; how arrogant is

the supposition, that aught but *His* blood could “blot out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us.” Could they know, experimentally, the excelling preciousness of this propitiation so freely tendered, how would they relinquish all claim to any share of merit, and humbly adore the mercies of redeeming love!

CHAPTER V.

"Thine be our earliest years, our last,
And our eternity."

"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2. *Tim.* iii. 15.

ON the following morning the Camerons commenced their journey towards Woodville. As Mrs. Cameron had premised, it was attended with little fatigue and inconvenience, the prospect of so soon again beholding that spot which, in the habitable globe, she best loved, had, apparently, added strength to her fragile frame, and towards the third day the old gates once more opened to receive her, who passed them not again till the dis-imprisoned soul had winged its flight on high, and its frail companion was but a spiritless clod.


The sorrowing domestics, to whom the ti-

dings of their revered mistress's decline was communicated, had arranged themselves, as was their wonted custom, in the hall, to await her entrance; but sad was the contrast of their feelings with those well remembered days, when the joyful announcement of her arrival shed gladness in every heart, and illumined each happy countenance. Now they were told she came but to breathe her last among them, and as they stood to receive her they felt a sorrow at their hearts no words could express. The carriage drove up, Mr. Cameron and Fanny alighted, and the invalid, supported by her husband, slowly followed. Since the first appearance of the carriage, not a sound was uttered, scarcely a breath heard by her faithful household; but one glance at the death-like aspect and wasted form of a mistress they so fondly loved, completely overcame their feelings, and the expression of their grief could not be repressed. Anticipating this, Fanny had, with her usual forethought, preceded her parents, and recognizing with kindness the weeping train, reminded them of the inconsiderateness of thus indulging their grief, and the agitation her mother must inevitably ex-

perience, should she behold it. Some of them, by a violent effort, repressed their bursting feelings, but others, unable to appear composed, hurried from the hall.

Old Cicely, the long-trying and faithful house-keeper, who on Fanny's entrance was weeping uncontrolledly, now removed her hands from her face, wiped her withered cheeks, and hastened to render what assistance she could in supporting the invalid into the parlour.

The restraint Mrs. Cameron had imposed on herself during the day, as she found they were so rapidly approaching Woodville, was no longer endurable, when she found herself once more placed on the sofa, and surrounded by scenes and evidences of former happiness; thoughts of these, and the knowledge of the frail tenure by which she so clung to existence, added to her recent fatigue both of mind and body, at length overpowered her, and she appeared for a considerable time deprived of consciousness. On recovering, she felt greatly relieved by a flood of tears, but ashamed of this unusual emotion before so many witnesses, (for the servants had not left the room,) she again assumed her composure, and was soon



enabled to reply to the tender interrogatories of her husband and child. When alone with them, she accused herself of sinfulness and ingratitude towards her Maker, for the feelings of reluctance to obey his call, which still lay unsubdued within, and her unreadiness to part with earthly objects. "Oh, how sad is the reflection," she continued, "that, even on the verge of eternity, the poor soul will fondly cling to the still much loved dust, and how coldly does it contemplate its passage from these highly prized objects to the Redeemer's presence? I had fancied—Oh! how short-sighted is mortality—that I had resigned myself, not only willingly but joyfully, to my speedy flight from earth; but objects of interest—sweet associations—and fond remembrances, crowd upon my mind, and show me still the very earthliness of my feelings. Father of mercies," she continued, "wean me from these cherished idols of my affection, and may I behold my approach towards blessedness with more rapturous, more perfect joy."

Mrs. Cameron declined retiring to her room, though greatly urged by her daughter, who dreaded a recurrence of her late weakness; but the first excitement on her return to Wood-

ville being now over, she felt greatly relieved, and, after having taken refreshment, she imagined her strength so much recruited, that she had the sofa wheeled round to her favorite window, and contemplated with renewed delight the various beauties of the lovely spot. The bright reviving green of the lawn, the softened foliage of the surrounding trees, the evening song of the feathery choristers, the balmy air and the setting sun, all conspired to fill the mind with tranquillity and gratitude; and Mrs. Cameron failed not to acknowledge the bounty of that God, who so plentifully provides for his creature's comforts. Suddenly, her attention was arrested by a rustling noise among the thick brushwood near the window, and the next moment a handsome Newfoundland dog sprang into the path; his erect head and wagging tail testified his joyful recognition of the party; he stood for a moment at the window, as if to satisfy himself that his friends were really there. Mr. Cameron opened the window and invited him to take his accustomed leap into the room, but bounding off with the rapidity of lightning, he was again lost among the bushes. "Faithful Cæsar, exclaimed Mr. Cameron, "you were not tardy in offering us

compliments on our return; your kind master is always an early visitor."

"There he is himself," said Mrs. Cameron, pointing to a distant figure, slowly moving up the avenue. "And Cæsar has rejoined him," remarked Fanny, "and seems to be communicating the joyful intelligence of our arrival; but he testifies his delight rather roughly," she added, as the dog continued to leap most unceremoniously on his master, sometimes bounding so high as to touch his shoulder. "Herbert heeds him not, for once," returned Mrs. Cameron, "for his unusually slow pace testifies that his thoughts are differently occupied. Yes," she softly added, as the visitor approached, "his sympathising heart feels this a sad contrast to our last meeting." Mr. Cameron left the room in order to meet his young friend, and Mrs. Cameron continued, "Dear Herbert, it is indeed a happiness to meet you once more on this side the grave, and I trust I am grateful to the Giver of all good for this kind favour, though your gentle nature will be pained to see your friend so altered, and to feel that you must soon lose your second mother."

Herbert Lindsay now entered; he had been

prepared by Mr. Cameron to behold a material change in his valued friend, and his sorrowing look plainly testified how fully he participated in the affliction of the family. Approaching Mrs. Cameron, he warmly pressed her outstretched hand; but the joyous welcome that was ever wont to greet her arrival at Woodville, after every short absence, died on his lips, and he seated himself, in silence, by her side. "Well, dear Herbert," said Mrs. Cameron, after a pause, "you little imagined, when we parted, a few months since, that I was so soon to tread the dark valley."—"True, dear Madam," replied he; "but we are weak-sighted mortals, and know not what a day may bring forth; the future is wisely and mercifully hidden from us."—"Oh, most mercifully," returned Mrs. Cameron, "as it regards the events of this life, but, blessed be God! we are not left in ignorance that there is a rest beyond, we are not left in darkness as to the life eternal. Ah! my friend," she continued, laying her hand on Herbert's arm, "without the comforting hope of eternal rest, how insupportable would be the thought that we must leave our loved ones behind."—"But," said Herbert, "can the love you bear these dear

objects of your earthly affection be put in competition to that you feel for the Saviour, who bled and died for you, who has ever shown himself to be a God of love?"—"Oh! I trust not, Herbert," replied Mrs. Cameron; "I would not weigh in the same balance the love I bear to him. Oh! I trust Christ is more precious to my soul—more lovely in my eyes—infinitely more desirable than all his other gifts;—that Saviour who is made unto me 'wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' "—"My dear Madam," said Herbert, "if this is your experience, you need not fear to enter the valley of the shadow of death; to the believer in Christ, that valley is enlightened by the presence of a gracious God;—the dark clouds which, to the unregenerate sinner, portend tempestuous and overwhelming storms, are, to his eye, gilded with beams of light, a foretaste of the shadowless glory that awaits him—the rocks and shoals which beset and surround the path of the hopeless sinner, so vast, so dark, so cheerless, are, to the believer, glowing with the refulgence of divine love, and pointing, in unextinguishable brightness, to that

'Land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign.'

A holy satisfaction beamed on the countenance of the invalid, and lit up her eye with unwonted animation, as the youthful pastor continued to lead her thoughts above this sublunary world, with all its shifting vicissitudes, to the blessedness which he doubted not awaited her. Mr. Cameron and Fanny joined in the conversation, and the evening passed rapidly. Mrs. Cameron had many questions to ask about her poor pensioners, and Fanny about her schools, the care and superintendence of which had, during their absence, necessarily devolved upon Herbert. His account of them gave much pleasure, and the warm thanks he received, abundantly repaid him for his extra labours.

Mrs. Cameron appearing now much fatigued, she requested her young friend to assemble the household for prayers, after which she retired, with a heart flowing with gratitude to her God, for his unexampled mercy in again suffering her to rest beneath this roof.

Herbert Lindsay, the rector of Woodville, was an only son; his parents had been the most intimate and best beloved friends of Mr. and Mrs. Cameron; his father held the living of Woodville for many years, where his memory

was still honoured and revered by every class of his parishioners. To the Camerons he was very dear,—he had participated in all their little trials and afflictions—had been their guide and director in spiritual matters—and a long tried and very sincere friend. A Christian is not exempt from the trials and afflictions incident on fallen man, and Mr. Lindsay was called to sustain one, perhaps, as difficult to be borne with resignation as any; he had the misfortune, before Herbert attained his tenth year, to lose his inestimable and fondly-loved wife; and the void then made in his heart required all a Christian's faith to endure unrepiningly. His little son, now the sole object of his earthly love, became doubly endeared to him; and, in cultivating his opening genius, and leading him to the contemplation and study of God's law, was the delightful employment of his otherwise solitary hours. But Herbert, with the natural vivacity of childhood, often felt the restraint of his sober pursuits irksome, and hailed, with rapture, the moment when, emancipated from study, he could bound from the glebe, and rejoin his "Mamma Cameron," as he called her, or amuse her lovely infant Fanny, or gambol on the lawn. . And yet Herbert

was not always thus, for he was a child of quick and sensitive feelings; and a sigh, or look of sadness, from his dear father would check his youthful ebullitions, and change the buoyant, light-hearted child, into the serious and engaging comforter; his little sports would be unthought of, and even his daily visit to the hall neglected. Must not a father's heart be drawn with tenfold tenderness towards such a being? And then, what but the grace of God can keep a Christian free from the error of idolatry when he presses such a loved one to his heart, with the consciousness that it is, indeed, his own. Mr. Lindsay felt the difficulty under which he laboured; but he perseveringly strove against the too fascinating enthrallment, and could, at length, bear his testimony to the word of God, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Under the directing eye of a judicious and affectionate father, hope's fairy promises expanded in the mind of Herbert. Ardent in the acquirement of knowledge, and preserving in its attainment, his progress was proportionally rapid; and as the child passed into the intelligent and pious youth, and again the youth

merged into the steady and serious man, the delighted parent beheld the blessed fruits of his Christian labours, under the fostering care of heaven.

In accordance with his father's wish, and his own decided inclination, Herbert looked forward to become an ambassador of Christ, a preacher of glad tidings; and, throughout his youthful days, he never sketched a picture of earthly felicity or enjoyment, that had not this for its end and aim. His wish was accomplished; he *was* called to labour in the vineyard; and from that pulpit from whence he had learnt many a lesson of godliness from a father's lips, he first proclaimed the truths of his glorious mission. How vainly can words express the grateful feelings of a father's heart, at this consummation of his long fostered desires; love, joy, gratitude, and submission, by turns agitated his bosom, as, with a moistened cheek, he gazed on the youthful monitor, in his first animated address, and felt that, if heaven preserved him faithful, he bid fair to become a useful steward of the mysteries of God. Associated with this dear parent in the interesting and responsible duties of his calling, Herbert became equally respected and beloved, and, for two years, no

interruption occurred to mar their happiness; but God saw fit to prove the fidelity and patience of his chosen one, by the removal of his beloved father, his counsellor, instructor, friend. Mr. Lindsay left this vale of tears, leaning on the arm of Omnipotence; and, though bowed down by the grievous bereavement, Herbert would not, if he could, recall the disimprisoned spirit, being happy in the consciousness that, to his parent, to live was Christ, and to die was gain.

Mr. Lindsay was deservedly regretted by his grateful parishioners, and their first desire, on his demise, was that the son of that revered pastor should still be their spiritual guide; great, therefore, was their joy and satisfaction when, through the interest of Mr. Cameron, Herbert obtained the living where he now traced the steps of his departed parent, diligently imitating the example of his Saviour, being “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;”—“a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.”—“holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”

Next to his father, Herbert venerated and respected his worthy friend, Mr. Cameron, from whom he had often received paternal and ex-

cellent advice; and now, though exalted to be a teacher himself, Herbert was neither too proud to ask, nor too self-satisfied to follow, the advice of older and more experienced Christians; by the Camerons he had always been loved, which affection appeared warmer and more close since his recent bereavement, and a day rarely passed at the Hall that witnessed not the arrival of the youthful minister.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Man’s wisdom is to seek
His strength in God alone,
And e’en an angel would be weak,
Who trusted in his own.”

“ Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself, as he that putteth it off.”—1 *Kings*, xx. 11.

THE throne of self-righteousness is in the inner man, from which tribunal the actions are impelled, controlled, and governed; and what is the first deteriorating principle its possession induces in a youthful mind?—Pride, false, baneful pride, and that ambition, which drove usurping angels from Jehovah’s presence, which instigates a worm of the dust to presume on his own service, as atonement for his own sinfulness, and robs God of his blessed attributes. The same idolater who, in the contemplation of his

own righteousness, breathed forth his thanks “that he was not as other men,” would soon, in the contumacy of this self-elated spirit, be ready to exclaim “there is no God;” so true is it, that unbelief is the offspring of pride and self-goodness.

And now turn we to a review of Catharine’s conduct during her visit to Brighton. She had set out trusting in flesh, leaning on a broken reed—without the influence of the spirit of grace—without soliciting that light and help which cometh from above; and what assurance could such a miserable beginning offer, but disappointment and failure? Shortly after her arrival, she interested herself in many of the religious societies there established, and having immediately connected herself with them, she found that her proposed visit to Woodville must be postponed for some time. Her conduct, in thus actively furthering these religious establishments, was not at that time deemed singular, for there was then a strong party in favour of religion, and it was considered *unfashionable* to resist the prevailing opinion. This spread of the semblance of piety was to be mainly attributed to the active and unshrinking endeavours of Mr. Denham, the rector of the

place. His predecessor had done little, either by precept or example, to stop the current of iniquity which flowed around; he was supine and careless, accommodating himself too much to the prevailing habits of his flock, thus tacitly countenancing their soul-consuming practices; he felt not the reality and excellency of the doctrines he proclaimed;—though appointed an ambassador of Christ, he possessed not the power of godliness; and though avowedly a preacher of righteousness, a bringer of glad tidings, he was, in reality, but a blind and erring guide, prophesying to a guilty world only smooth things,—a silent watchman, that sounded not the warning trumpet to turn the wicked from his iniquity. But far different were the life and preaching of Mr. Denham;—a faithful steward of the mysteries of God; his time, his talents, and his every faculty, were put in requisition, to fulfil conscientiously the duties of his high calling; he had entered on a large sphere of usefulness, but he did not shrink from it, knowing that the Lord, in whom he trusted, would “strengthen him with might by his spirit in the inner man,” to preach the word with all fidelity, and fight the good fight of faith. Supported by this comforting assurance, he was

enabled fearlessly to proclaim to the hardened sinners the just judgments of an offended God, while he poured the balm of heavenly consolation on the contrite and broken-hearted believer; rightly dividing the word of truth, he threatened the ungodly, encouraged the feeble-minded, and supported the strong.

At the period of Catharine's arrival in Brighton, Mr. Denham had been but twelve months in this ardent prosecution of his duty, and the popular feeling was still in his favour; added to his more inestimable gifts, he was young and eloquent, which alone, to the restless minded multitude, would be sufficient, for some time, to crowd his church, and ensure him a patient hearing; and if, with these, we contrast the dulness and lukewarmness of their former pastor, it can not be a matter of wonder that a visible change was wrought—if not in the hearts, at least in the outward bearing of a large portion of his parishioners. That there were a chosen few, the humble followers of the Lamb, who eagerly gathered and treasured up the crumbs of the bread of life distributed by the man of God, is doubtless certain; but we are constrained to lament, that the greater number of his hearers met rather for novelty

or fashion's sake—to keep up an appearance—or to assemble, merely because it was customary; or, still more sad, perhaps to

“Jest on the preacher's language and expression;”

forgetting that

“None shall in hell such bitter pangs endure

As those who mock at God's way of salvation.”

Mr. Denham's first terror-striking discourse, from the words of the inspired psalmist, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God,” though it had awakened a few trembling sinners to enquire “what must I do to be saved?”—had, to the multitude, no terrors: an evanescent feeling of self-condemnation might have darted through the minds of some, but, the next moment, their hearts were hardened, and, with the voice of the preacher, would cease every compunctious sentiment.

The intelligent pastor was not slow in perceiving that Catharine's change of sentiments was of very recent date, and that much pruning and weeding would be required with the too exuberant plant. Without appearing to do so, he desired to check the manifestation of her ardent zeal, which had shot forth with such precocity, and to impress on her the

beauty of that species of steady humility so descriptive of a child of God. But Catharine's ardour would not be repressed, she assisted at the schools, visited the poor, distributed tracts, attended every religious society met for the benefit of religious discussion and enquiry; and joined outwardly, at least, in every laudable and beneficial service, hesitating not to talk of *her* experience, aiming at being a teacher of others, while she had need herself to be taught what be the first principles of the oracles of God. This zeal without knowledge, though censured by some, did not fail to attract the appearance-judging world, and the young convert, with her large fortune and personal loveliness, soon became an object of as much admiration in the religious circle as their worthy pastor had formerly been, and no appeal was made from her decision. And was she now happy?—Ah, no! That insatiate thirst for praise and admiration, which had incited her to this unwearied assiduity, was not quenched, while she yet beheld the few unextolling friends who silently contemplated her pains-taking career; and while she heard herself rapturously applauded by the far greater number, and loaded with smiles and thanks, she said, in the

bitterness of her heart, “ Yet all this availeth me not.”

Three weeks had thus passed: and, except a few hasty lines, acquainting them with her arrival, Catharine had not communicated with her friends in Woodville; and Fanny’s second letter lay still unanswered, when, one morning, to her infinite surprise, Edgar (whose abstracted manner and clouded countenance of late had not been unobserved by her) signified his intention of visiting his uncle, and enquired if he should be the bearer of any message from her, at the same time reminding her, that *she* had not fulfilled her engagement in returning to her friends. Heeding not his concluding remark, Catharine asked the cause of this sudden determination, and on Edgar replying, in a hurried manner, that the noisy insipidity of the place was no longer tolerable, and that he yearned for something like rationality and quiet, her astonishment increased, and she looked enquiringly at him. Edgar answered not the interrogating look, but rose to leave the room, telling her he purposed leaving Brighton at an early hour the following day.

“ Most unaccountable conduct,” exclaimed Catharine to Miss Evelyn, as soon as Edgar

had left the room. "What can induce Edgar to leave Brighton? and just at this time in particular, when he expects Charles Melville daily, and has been dying with impatience to see him: what can have possessed him?" she added, in a tone of evident disquietude.

"Doubtless, some new whim or fancy," returned Miss Evelyn, or, perhaps, a few evenings' ill success at billiards, or a sudden inclination to rusticate for a season, or—in short, I might enumerate many reasons for a young man's departure from a fashionable watering place, any one of which would be deemed absolute."

"But I am not so certain," replied Catharine, "that he is actuated by any of the reasons you imagine; some more powerful motive must, I think, determine *him*, for he has ever been a decided enemy to retirement, invariably shunning it, if possible, which makes his present conduct more inexplicable." Catharine remained thoughtfully silent for some time, till Miss Evelyn, who had been watching her perplexed, and evidently perturbed brow, exclaimed, laughing, "Patience, dear girl; time will developethis mighty mystery; content yourself that Edgar will not be stationary at Woodville

longer than to give him a fresh zest for all the gaieties he is about resigning for a season."

"My dear aunt," said Catharine, "you misconceive me entirely, if you imagine I have any desire to detain Edgar in Brighton; on the contrary, I am sincerely rejoiced to learn his determination of quitting it: but I acknowledge, that the unexpected announcement of his intention has made me anxious to know what motive had been found strong enough to weigh with such a lordly wight." Seemingly impressed with some happy solution to this enigma, Miss Evelyn drew her chair nearer to Catharine, and, in a confidential manner, enquired, "Could Fanny Cameron be the object of this visit?"—"I can scarcely think so," answered Catharine, hesitatingly; "though I own such an idea occurred to me, but his manner towards her, ever since they first met, would not warrant such a supposition; the feeling, as of a brother for a sister, seemed alone to actuate him; and yet, as there is no accounting for such things, it has a show of probability."

"More, much more than that," replied Miss Evelyn, who, on finding her surmise not disregarded, began to show great interest in the affair. "I could enumerate numberless occur-

rences, which fell within my own observation, during my residence at the Camerons', that led me to imagine Edgar's heart was softening towards Fanny,—those silent, nameless attentions, which so imperceptibly operate;" and Miss Evelyn recalled to Catharine's memory several instances of unusual regard and kindly feeling displayed by Edgar towards his lovely cousin, which, Miss Evelyn averred, were indisputable evidences in support of her assertion. Catharine admitted these facts, but still, knowing the dissimilarity of taste in the parties, she hesitated to come to the conclusion at which Miss Evelyn had already arrived, and even ventured to affirm, that though Fanny might have excited an interest in Edgar's hitherto inaccessible heart, she was very certain he would fail in eliciting a corresponding feeling in hers. Miss Evelyn took fire at this, the bare idea that Edgar (whom she had ever considered a paragon of perfection) could be an unsuccessful suitor, appeared so monstrous an absurdity, that she was ready to quarrel with Catharine for such a thought, and loudly declared, that, if Edgar was earnest in the pursuit, rejection was impossible.

The entrance of Mr. Denham, who had now

become a constant visiter at Miss Evelyn's, changed the subject of conversation, and the old lady, who, notwithstanding his strictness and singularity, had conceived a high respect for him, welcomed him with her usual animation. In the course of the conversation which ensued, Edgar's strange resolve was mentioned, and greatly were the ladies surprised to find that it was by the earnest advice of Mr. Denham that Edgar now acted. Catharine, all surprise, looked enquiringly at Mr. Denham. "I do not think," he replied, "I should be justified in making you acquainted with the immediate cause of his present journey; perhaps, it is sufficient to know, that the tainted atmosphere in which he has hitherto lived has become loathsome to him, and, following my suggestion, he is now about to transplant himself into, I trust, a soil more congenial for the growth of such principles as become a responsible being, and which the too-fascinating example of the world is so calculated to destroy."

"Has he given any evidence of being made the subject of grace?" asked Catharine, doubtfully.

"Such a question I am not able to solve," replied Mr. Denham; "nor do I think too

much delicacy can be observed with regard to such a subject. Your brother's reformation, if sincere, is of so very recent a date, that I should deem it presumptuous in any mortal to affirm, positively, respecting its effects; he is evidently labouring under great uneasiness of mind. A deep consciousness of sin, and of his own individual depravity, has bowed him down; but he grasps not at the alone antidote:—he appears fully satisfied of his own insufficiency to make any the least atonement for his unnumbered offences, and yet he hesitates to cast this grievous burden on the conqueror of sin and Satan; and, while he feels the deadly curse, he will not seek the mighty Saviour, who can alone remove it.”—“Oh! what misery!” exclaimed Catharine; “surely, you have represented to him the accumulating wretchedness he is heaping on himself.”

“I have,” said Mr. Denham; “but, hitherto, reasoning, expostulation, and entreaty, have failed; yet, in God's good time, I trust to hear of the manifestation of the power of *his* grace in the soul of your brother, when he will no longer resist his introduction to the fold of God.”

“May I ask,” enquired Miss Evelyn, who,

though in general a determined opposer of any thing like serious conversation, had paid the most undivided attention to every word now spoken by Mr. Denham, "may I ask, if it was Edgar's own wish, in the first instance, to go to Woodville? Why not, if he must needs go into the country for improvement, why not go to his own place, which, I should think, would greatly need a master's eye; but possibly," she added, in a tone of irony, "the temperature of Yorkshire would be as little favourable towards it as Brighton seems to be."

"It was from such an impression," returned Mr. Denham, "that I opposed his previous design of going there. Complete seclusion, in his present frame of feeling, might be attended with consequences dangerous in the extreme. But I had a double motive in over-ruling his objection to paying this visit to his uncle, as it is very evident, from the particulars with which he has made me acquainted, that Mr. Cameron's powerful example in the Christian's path of duty has done much towards convincing him of the depravity of his own heart, and I trust I do not rest on unfeasible premises, when I anticipate, with the blessing of the Almighty, an equal proportion of benefit from

the same spring, acting as a counterbalance on the mind of our unhappy friend."

Mr. Denham now intimated how anxious Edgar was that his sister should accompany him to Woodville, particularly as the last accounts from thence spoke unfavourably of the invalid. Catharine pleaded her numerous engagements as a reason for not having fulfilled her promise; and, though reminded by Mr. Denham, that duty as imperiously called her to her aunt's dying couch, and her brother's side, she did not, or would not, see the path before her, but blindly persisted in following the dictates of her own heart. Mr. Denham took his leave, and Catharine retired to write her long neglected letter to Fanny. Edgar, having obtained a promise from his sister, to rejoin him shortly, set out the following morning.

Weak, sadly weak and deficient, are all our purposes of amendment and improvement, without the strengthening influence of the spirit of God; like the morning cloud, all resolutions fade that are not placed on the rock of ages. Poor Catharine's religion had self for its basis; and this unstable foundation, in the

her boast had been in the strength of her own might, and power, and capability, she was yet easily led by surrounding example. Her feelings had, at first, been excited by the pious and lovely demeanour of her cousin, the uniformity and consistency of her uncle's principles operating on his conduct, and the force of pure religion exemplified in her dear aunt's patient resignation in suffering, and her evident happiness under view of the approaches of death; but these feelings were without root—the vital principle was wanting—the germ of true religion was not there; her feelings were aroused, but her principles were unchanged—her sensibility was awakened, but her heart was untouched—with her it was a profession—a mere sentiment—a body without a spirit—a lovely vision without reality or endurance. These surface-depth feelings continued still to operate, when, on her arrival in Brighton, Catharine became acquainted with many sincere and heavenly-minded Christians, and, as we have seen, was soon prominent for her zeal and activity; but, ere many weeks had passed, she felt that her restless mind began to tire of the same round of unvarying pursuits, and she

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first approaches of ennui and lukewarmness, she thought to overcome them by redoubling her self-imposed exertions; but, finding all her efforts insufficient to expel these demons, she began to conjecture something must be wrong, and, with the natural blindness of the unregenerate heart, she imputed to the system the errors which belonged to herself alone. She had so far been less culpable before, that she had hitherto acted from a belief of her own rectitude, and according to her conception of what was praiseworthy—she had sinned ignorantly in belief—but now, to keep up appearances, she was fain to become a dissembler—to hide her real feelings, and to appear what she was not. She slackened not in her accustomed service, still went through the usual routine of her toilsome duties, still was seen the foremost in each benevolent scheme, but with a heart devoid of every generous sentiment—destitute of any plea before God, for, in his eyes, she was a detected hypocrite. She was thus toiling through her self-imposed penances, when circumstances occurred which wrought a material change in her movements.

Charles Melville, the accomplished but ungodly companion of Edgar Evelyn, arrived in

Brighton, for the express purpose of meeting his friend, and his disappointment was extreme at finding he had left the place. He was introduced to Catharine. His former intimate fellowship with her brother, and his anxiety for information regarding him, made him eager in cultivating her acquaintance; and Catharine, who was heartily wearied of her present pursuits, but who was too proud to mix in the society she had at first contemptuously rejected, gladly grasped at any thing that promised a respite from the intolerable burden under which she groaned. But disingenuousness was still evident in her present conduct; for, while she was each day becoming more and more infatuated with the fascinating society that met at her aunt's house, she allowed it to be understood that, though compelled by the usages of that society she professed to despise, to associate with beings of a stamp of mind little in accordance with her own, still her heart was not among them—in spirit she was with the Lord's people—in spirit she was separate from these enemies of God. Impious assertion! "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt? or, can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?" Neither

can they be unpolluted and undefiled who are satisfied to live in the regions of corruption, and to witness, without a struggle, the follies of the unregenerate.

Charles Melville's exterior was strikingly handsome, his address insinuating, and his mind highly cultivated; but, with all these advantages, he was a worthless, despicable character, like the brilliant infidel he so closely imitated, his highest ambition was to pervert the understandings of such as came within his magic influence, to blast and wither every opening bud of promise, and to crush the first appearance of every noble sentiment. His meretricious influence had been exerted, and not unsuccessfully, on his friend Edgar; but he not unfrequently experienced some internal misgivings as to his ultimate success in the overthrow of every ennobling feeling in his young friend's mind, and felt that, if removed from his society, and associated with others opposed to him in principle, Edgar's mind might regain something of its wonted powers. Accordingly, he resolved, on his return to England, to usurp that ascendancy over his friend's mind he had hitherto held and again chain his every thought and faculty in the service of *his* master. Great,

therefore, was his disappointment not only at not finding Edgar in Brighton, but on learning that he had been spending the last month with his uncle Cameron, of whose character and opinions Melville was not ignorant. Frustrated in his first design, he now turned all his attention to his friend's fascinating sister. A very superficial knowledge enabled him to detect her besetting sin—he saw the struggle that agitated her, and, with all the subtlety of the author of wickedness, he resolved to turn it to his own account. He was aware her fortune was considerable, and his own pecuniary embarrassments called on him loudly for exertion; added to which, her more than common attractions increased the interest he felt in the pursuit, and he set him seriously to work to ingratiate himself in her esteem. On the first few days of their acquaintance, he had openly avowed his contempt of religion—he had scoffed and ridiculed at the name of piety; but now he wrought on what he conceived more successful ground—he compelled himself to be silent on the subject, yet, with admirable address, allowing it to be understood that this forbearance arose entirely from deference to his fair friend. Melville was not ignorant of his own attrac-

tions, and experience had taught him what measure of success to expect from them; yet still he felt, in the present instance, that perseverance and assiduity, joined to much tact and address, were required. He had already, by the power of his alluring manners, completely won over Miss Evelyn to his interests; and, with so powerful an ally, he began to hope for the issue. Still one obstacle (and that of no small magnitude) stood opposed to his progress—the presence and unwearied attention of Sir James Merton. Melville was aware that the mind of the dashing baronet was not held in high estimation by Catharine; and yet, knowing the waywardness of woman's mind, he could not behold the assiduity of Sir James unmoved. The baronet had an elegant address—handsome person—splendid equipage—and an estate of some thousands a-year, each and all, powerful advocates in his favour. Though conscious of his superiority in every other point, in the last-mentioned (and, in this instance, more desirable qualification) Melville had less to boast. He was a younger son, and had squandered away, in thoughtless extravagance, whatever small patrimony had devolved on him on his father's demise. An uncle's liberality had hith-

erto saved him in many pecuniary emergencies; but his wants and applications became daily more urgent; and his ill-judging relative, at length, perceived the unsatisfying nature of these demands on his purse, and had, since Melville's return from the continent, refused to extricate him from debt as usual. Thus circumstanced, the present opportunity of retrieving his losses seemed to promise fair, and, with a motive so urgent, it is natural to suppose perseverance and exertion were not wanting.

CHAPTER VII.

——— “What evil fruits
Have from one seed of black rebellion sprung !”

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”—*Titus*, i. 16.

“So Edgar has positively refused to return?” exclaimed the elder Miss Evelyn one morning to Melville, who had just received a letter to that purport from his friend. “Positively,” returned Melville, “and that without assigning cause or reason, more than that he found Brighton so intolerably dull that he blesses his stars he is now out of it. Can it be,” continued he, turning to Catharine, who was industriously assisting Sir James Merton in disentangling a skein of silk, “that your little saintly cousin has infected the poor youth?” Catharine

looked up from her employment, and smiled superciliously. "Nay, raise not your haughty lip, fair lady," continued Melville; "I lessen not the merits of your paragon of piety, by insinuating that she could excite an interest in Edgar's flinty heart.

"Catharine would willingly admit that," exclaimed Miss Evelyn, "though she is sceptical as to a mutual feeling being elicited."

"Indeed!" returned Melville; "surely, you do not mean to say that your little recluse, of whose goodness you have favoured me with so many instances, is stoical enough to be indifferent to Edgar's powers of pleasing."

"I mean to say," exclaimed Catharine, a momentary feeling of self-condemnation arising, "that if Edgar's principles are unchanged, and that he continues still to give them utterance, I mean to say that Fanny would feel the greatest repugnance even to endure his society." She sighed as she resumed her employment, now become, by reason of the poor baronet's impatience, more intricate and entangled.

"Perseverance can conquer all things," remarked Melville, "and the steady contiguity of warmth will eventually thaw the most impenetrable heart, and this little saint *may* be tempted,

at length, to endure the hateful society of your brother." Catharine shook her head. "May she not endure it in the hopes of reforming the naughty boy?" continued Melville.

Catharine smiled again, but it was a smile calculated rather to encourage than repress Melville's satire, and he lost not so fair an occasion of displaying his infidel wit and ungodly propensities; remarking with much satisfaction, that Catharine, who, a short time since, would have appeared shocked by such conversation, and endeavoured both by voice and look to check it, was now, apparently, indifferent and careless as to the expression of his sentiments; or if any feeling was now visible, it was not of disapprobation. What more indubitable proof need we of the still unregenerate state of that man's heart, who willingly abides with, and takes delight in, those who cast amongst them firebrands, arrows, and death.

"So you think the *conversion* of Edgar almost impracticable?" pursued Melville.

"I don't remember having said so," returned Catharine, "for I scarcely thought about it; but I have a presentiment that it will require some degree of patience and perseverance, even more," she continued, "than Sir James has dis-

played in this knotty and intricate affair,"—smiling at the perplexed baronet, who, in despair, was about to give up his undertaking.

"Is that the reward of all my unwearied patience, Miss Evelyn?" exclaimed the worthy baronet, "in this, this worse than Gordian knot?"

"Pardon," said Catharine, "my ungracious return for your two hours' labour, for, in truth, you have succeeded admirably in rendering my skein of silk perfectly useless." As she spoke, she held up the dragged and tattered ends of silk, and laughingly enquired if it was not incumbent on her to propose a vote of thanks for so beneficial a service.

The baronet joined in the general laugh against himself, and vowed no more to offer himself for so thankless a service.

Catharine had absented herself of late, in a great measure, from her toilsome duties in the religious world, but her lukewarmness, and subsequent total indifference, had not been unnoticed or unproved by her friend Mr. Denham. Ever ready with excuses or palliatives for her conduct, Catharine profited little by the continued arguments and expostulations of Mr. Denham, and though she professed implicit

deference to every word he uttered, and never failed to thank him with apparent sincerity, it wrought no further change in her behaviour than to make her still more the child of duplicity than she had been. In the mean time, Melville became fully sensible of his increasing influence with his fair friend, and the consequent estrangement of her thoughts from her former companions. Anxious to establish his power, and withdraw Catharine more effectually from the possibility of mingling in godly society, he conceived and broached a scheme calculated to effect this purpose.

Entering the room, one morning, where the ladies were seated, he informed them in the most rapturous delight that he had been solicited by Colonel and Mrs. Conway, to exert himself in forming a party to spend the following month in Paris; he enumerated many who had already promised to join, (some of whom, he knew, stood high in the favour of Catharine,) and spoke in terms of unqualified admiration of the charms of that bewitching city. "Now what think ye, ladies," he continued, "of following so excellent an example, and leaving this emporium of stupidity, to revel in the delights of the ever brilliant Paris?" Sir

James Merton, who was present, warmly and loudly applauded the scheme—protested it was an admirable thought, and deserved infinite credit. Melville looked earnestly for Catharine's approving smile—"Well," said Miss Evelyn, "I like the idea amazingly. Catharine, my love, what say you? it will be but for a month."—"Or less, my dear Madam," exclaimed Melville, "if we find not the anticipated pleasure." He continued to watch Catharine's countenance, which indicated an internal struggle between inclination and duty. At length she replied, that she doubted not the pleasure which awaited them in Paris, particularly augmented, as it would be, by so agreeable a party as had already been arranged, but duty obliged her to deny herself such gratification. She had promised, long ere this, to join her friends in Woodville, and could no longer delay, consequently her presence must be dispensed with. Loud remonstrances from her aunt and the gentlemen followed this avowal of Catharine's determination, and every persuasive argument was used in order to shake her purpose. In justice we must add, that she long held out against this artillery of entreaty, and at length, when, by the dint of flattery and expostulation, she was

won over to give an answer of acquiescence, her consent was only obtained conditionally, that she should previously visit, for a few days, her worthy friends, and then return to accompany the gay party, should such be approved of by her uncle and brother.

From this there could be no appeal, though it was precisely what Melville was most desirous to avoid; the influence of her uncle's family, though but for a short time, would, he knew, conduce to lessen his, and, in all probability, effectually frustrate his schemes. To prevent this was now his most earnest desire, and it can not be doubted that, to such a mind, a suitable expedient was not long wanting.

A few days after the above conversation, Melville enquired of Catharine if she had any letter or message he could deliver at Woodville, as business called him for a few days into that neighbourhood, and, of course, he should call on Edgar. Catharine wrote, apprising her brother of her intention to visit Woodville immediately, and for what purpose. She purposed, on the second day after despatching her letter, to leave Brighton, but she found herself unavoidably detained longer than she anticipated, and ere she had made the necessary preparations

for her departure, Melville had returned. He informed her that he had not called at the Hall, but had met Edgar in the village, while on his way thither, that Edgar seemed heartily tired of his exile, and was about to leave it, and had entrusted him with a letter, which he now presented her. Catharine's extreme surprise at Melville's speedy return was greatly increased by the perusal of the following letter.

“ Dear Kate,—Your determination of quitting the almost monkish seclusion of Brighton, and be transplanted into the midst of the enchantments of Paris, is a matter of no surprise to me; and were it not that business of the first urgency obliges me to be off to the north, I would most willingly accompany you. I don't see why you should put yourself to the trouble and inconvenience of coming here only for a few days, when you can, on your return from Paris, favour the good people with your company for a longer period, which, by the bye, from what I can learn, would be equally agreeable to the family. My aunt is still declining:—no chance, I apprehend, of her recovery. I was heartily glad to see my good friend, Charles

Melville. Remember me kindly to the old lady. Should she be inclined to remain in Paris longer than the month, it is possible I may join you.

“Your’s in haste,

“E. EVELYN.”

Had Catharine possessed one spark of her usual discernment she might easily have detected this gross imposture; but, blinded by vanity, and having her understanding warped by the adulation to which she had subjected herself, she saw not the artifice. The perusal of the letter had awakened feelings of no pleasurable nature; it was evident that her uncle and Fanny approved not of her intended excursion, or that she had become indifferent to them, for nothing less, she argued, would have induced them to neglect sending some message or letter. Aroused by this seeming indifference on their part, which was greatly aggravated by the heightened colouring of Melville, Catharine resolved to treat them similarly, and leave the kingdom without communicating with them. Accordingly, at the time arranged, our weak and self-loving friend, accompanied by her

aunt Evelyn, and surrounded by admiring and treacherous sycophants, embarked in Colonel Conway's pleasure-yacht, for Havre, whither they arrived in due time, and proceeded direct to the centre of attraction, the brilliant and luxurious Paris.

CHAPTER VIII.

“God’s purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour,
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.”

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:
it is the gift of God.”—*Ephesians*, ii. 8.

UNWILLING to follow Catharine Evelyn into the scenes of dissipation and frivolity which succeeded her arrival in the far-famed city, or to trace the progress of those soul-consuming habits which originated in self-dependence, we must again turn the attention of our young readers to other and far different personages.

On a small eminence, not far distant from the high road which skirted Mr. Cameron’s domain, stood a neat slated cottage, which could not but attract attention by the air of extreme

comfort diffused around it. Its trellissed porch and wood-bine wreathed windows betokened that taste and industry had combined to improve its natural advantages; a well swept pathway, which terminated in a rustic gate, seemed to invite the approach of the passer by, while, shaded by a spreading oak, and ornamented by surrounding patches of larch and fir, it looked like the dwelling place of contentment. Here the misanthropist, the worldling, or the cynic might gaze, and an unconscious sigh would remind them that the peace and serenity here depicted, correspond not with the turmoil of their own breasts; the voluptuary might, indeed, look contempt on the scene—for his jarring passions and rebellious thoughts could ill accord with such happiness; while the poor convicted sinner, labouring under the burden of his enormities, and bowed down with despair and anguish, might, while gazing here, be taught to feel that mercy is not incompatible with justice, and that his justly offended God would yet be gracious.

The sun had almost attained his meridian height, and his burning beams were descending with intense power—the ground was parched and split—the shallow brooks and rivulets

yielded to its consuming sway, and were absorbed by the famishing earth—no kindly breeze agitated the surrounding foliage,—not a leaf stirred;—nature seemed to have sunk into supineness, unable to resist the overwhelming influence of the blazing orb. The reigning stillness was at length interrupted by the sound of a horse's hoofs languidly advancing; the panting animal ceased to obey his rider's tokens of impatience, who at length, loosening the rein, allowed his steed to choose his own pace, while, apparently unconscious of the surrounding beauties of nature, the traveller, with folded arms and a perturbed brow, was lost in reverie. He approached the gate leading to the slated cottage, and suddenly his attention was arrested, and his deep thoughts, for the moment, dissipated by the sound of a faint buzzing noise proceeding from the cottage. Raising his eyes, he contemplated the lovely spot with unusual pleasure. The cool freshness it presented was a direct contrast to the scorching path he had been traversing, and heightened in his eyes its original beauty—its latticed windows were flung open to admit the balmy air, at one of which appeared two rosy and laughter-loving faces, glowing in all the artlessness and gaiety

of childhood—the little urchins were endeavouring to make their own of a fair sprig of clematis, which, escaped from its confinement, had strayed within their grasp, and so eager were they in the accomplishment of their object, that they observed not the traveller, who had already tied his horse to the gate, and was advancing up the path.

Fearful of disturbing the inmates by lifting the latch, the stranger advanced towards the window, and, having plucked the desired prize for the still eager contenders, he placed a hand on each little flaxen head, which was now sunk with bashful surprise, and took cognizance of the scene within.

A number of merry and healthy looking children were dispersed in different parts of the room—some were engaged in a luxurious game of romps—others had crowded round one of their young companions, who, seated with all the self-importance of a monitor, was exhibiting to their admiring eyes, some Scripture prints, giving, in her infant language, their explanation:—others had retired to a more distant part of the room, and were personating the mistress and scholar, with admirable exactness:—an elderly and neatly-dressed woman was en-

deavouring to keep quietness and order, but the little fairies were not to be silenced, when school duties had ceased, but evidenced, by their light-heartedness and playful mirth, that they had, by previous attention, won the privilege they now enjoyed.

But what most forcibly arrested the attention, was a scene close beneath the window at which the intruder had stationed himself,—a young delinquent, with swollen face and down-cast eyes, was standing opposite to the slight and graceful Fanny Cameron, who, with her back towards the window, was seated on a low stool. She was evidently endeavouring to subdue the angry feelings of the little being before her; in the confusion within, her voice could not well be distinguished, but it was perceptible that she referred much to the bible which she held in her hand, occasionally taking the hand of the little sullen one, as if to impress with more affectionate fervency the truths she uttered:—this tender, endearing correction was blessed in the end—the demon of passion was exorcised, the shades of ill humour gradually disappeared from the face of the infant Megæra, till at length, hiding her face in her kind instructress's lap, she wept the tears of penitence

and shame. A reconciling and approving pat on the head induced the little trembling culprit to raise her eyes to the encouraging countenance of her friend, and wiping her tearful face in her pinafore, she looked her thanks for the gentleness with which she had been reprov'd.

The sultry day and closeness of the room had obliged Fanny to throw aside her bonnet, and turning to resume it, she first recognized her pleased and attentive auditor. "Edgar!" she exclaimed, in glad surprise, as he eagerly extended his hand, "this is truly wonderful. I thought the country had no charms for you?" "So I conceived myself, Fanny," he returned; "but the scene I have just witnessed would go far to prove the contrary." Fanny was puzzled, for she had frequently heard Edgar express his decided disapprobation and contempt of such engagements as that in which he now found her: her colour was heightened by the expectation that his ridicule would be levelled against this scene, and she could scarcely believe that he spoke sincerely, in what he had now said.

Edgar perceived it, and as she joined him, and conducted him through her terrace-walk towards the house, he exclaimed, "Never, Fanny, believe me, did the unreality and un-

satisfactory nature of the world's vanities appear more forcible to my mind, than when contrasted with the lovely scene I but now beheld."

After the first surprise at Edgar's unexpected appearance had subsided, Fanny eagerly enquired if Catharine had accompanied him, and felt extreme disappointment, that Catharine should have forgotten her promise.

Edgar was warmly welcomed by his uncle and aunt, and introduced to the young minister, who, in order to induce Fanny to quit her mother's side for one hour daily, had promised to remain with and read to Mrs. Cameron during that time; and that these hours were blessed to the soul of the invalid, can not be doubted, for Herbert Lindsay, though young, possessed that discriminating power, which enabled him to distribute the word of life to each individual, according to their measure of faith, feeding the babes with milk, but imparting to the experienced Christian the meat which he required.

Edgar had now left the gay scenes and lively company of Brighton, had taken a solitary and melancholy journey into Somersetshire, to visit one whose thoughts and pursuits

had ever been diametrically opposed to his own—and yet his motives for this he could scarcely define. He had acted in accordance with the friendly advice of the excellent Mr. Denham; yet, without any hope of alleviating his mental torture, he was oppressed with feelings altogether new and unintelligible to him;—one thing he knew and felt, that he was miserable. The strong barrier of unbelief, which he had so long erected in opposition to the doctrines of christianity, had given way; and the power of the word of God had, with the piercing swiftness of a flash of electric fluid, struck conviction in his obdurate heart. But did this awakening of conscience render him happy?—Oh, no!

“Conviction hath no power to conquer sin,—

The work of *grace* alone.”

His mind was aroused to feelings of inexpressible anguish. He beheld himself a lost, undone malefactor, and writhing under the intolerable burden of his guilt, he dared not ask for mercy; he dared not hope for salvation; he saw nought but the sword of justice, and considered his destruction as inevitable; the subtle temper assailed him with tenfold assiduity, closing his eyes against the door of mercy, which is never

closed against a penitent. Edgar pleaded not for mercy, for his ungodly life seemed to warn him that that mercy extended not to him. Ere he left Brighton, when he pondered over opportunities neglected—warnings despised—hopes ridiculed—vengeance set at nought, he could view nothing but an offended God in all his dread omnipotence.

Self debased and humbled in soul, he felt that the pleasures in which he had formerly so freely indulged could yield him no relief. In vain at first he tried to fly from the whispers of conscience—in vain he sought to blunt its stings by plunging deeper into the tide of iniquity—all would not do, and, unconscious of any thing save the rankling of the barbed arrow in his heart, he resolved to seek, in solitude and quietness, some respite from his misery. At the suggestion of his friend, he gave up his original intention of retiring to Tudor Hall, (his own estate in Yorkshire,) and proceeded to Woodville. Though he expressed his conviction, that peace of mind had fled from him for ever, yet it may be imagined that some latent hope, some lurking perception taught him that his uncle, through whose instrumentality, under God, he was first awakened to some knowledge of his

state, might, through the same blessed influence, find some balm wherewith to ameliorate this internal anguish,—some drop of comfort to pour into his cup of despair.

Mr. Cameron was not long in perceiving that some conflict of no common nature agitated his nephew. Edgar's eagerness to question him on spiritual matters, his manifest desire for more light, and his evident anxiety, that his own overwhelming feelings should be unnoticed, led Mr. Cameron justly to infer, that he was now in a situation of the deepest interest, that he was, apparently, on the eve of being recalled from a death unto sin, to a life unto righteousness;—a revolution so blessed, so glorious, that, even in the contemplation of it, "the pure spirits which surround Jehovah's throne would shout their joyful acclamations."

Mr. Cameron acted on the present discovery with his usual prudence and clear-sightedness; he desired to dispel all delusion from the path the awakening sinner was pursuing—to withdraw the veil of perplexity with which Satan was endeavouring to blind him, and to impress him with a clear understanding of the right ground of acceptance with God. As a first step, Mr. Cameron earnestly desired to overcome

Edgar's natural reserve of speaking on his own individual feelings. His solicitude to conceal them from his uncle rendered his embarrassed and fearful questions still more dark and unintelligible. To remedy this, Mr. Cameron conceived that the society and holy conversation of Herbert Lindsay might be effectual; and earnestly pressed on Herbert the important task, requesting him to devote as much of his leisure as possible, in endeavouring, with God's assistance, to enlighten the mind, and remove the doubts, of this interesting enquirer.

It can not be supposed that Herbert was backward in this labour of love—he assiduously cultivated Edgar's acquaintance, who soon, from feelings of the highest respect and admiration, as eagerly coveted his. Their more intimate friendship was not calculated to diminish this sentiment. Herbert's uniform uprightness and consistency of conduct, his undissembled sincerity, but, above all, the unwearied perseverance and patience he displayed, while endeavouring to dispel the thick clouds of distrust and disbelief which intercepted from the mourning sinner the view of Calvary, all conspired to fill Edgar's mind with no common feelings of regard and gratitude towards him. Herbert

pointed to the finished work of redemption—he spoke of a Saviour—an atonement—a propitiation—an intercessor;—he showed the robe of righteousness, ever ready for the truly contrite soul—the bow of mercy extending on high—the fullness of that love which passeth knowledge—the greatness of that mercy which rejoiceth against judgment. Heavenward he fixed his listener's gaze—and, as a panting falcon, who, in an upward flight, can alone escape from its merciless pursuers, so did this sin-bound soul, “looking to Jesus,” evade the adversaries' power—the gross darkness gradually disappeared—the scales fell from his eyes—and Edgar at length could feel that God was gracious.

This had not been accomplished suddenly: again and again had doubts recurred to bewilder and puzzle him; but Edgar found that greater were those that were for him than those that were against him, and through the strengthening influence of the Spirit of God, he was enabled to overthrow the barriers of Satan's erection, and to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER IX.

• "Shudder not to pass the stream :
Venture all thy care on *Him*."

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made
alive."—1 *Corinthians*, xv. 22.

EDGAR had been but a few weeks at Woodville, and had not yet fully discerned the nature and extent of those blessings now opening to him, when he was called upon to witness the triumph of faith and love in the soul of a dying believer. Mrs. Cameron, contrary to the expectation of her medical attendants, had lingered out some months, and now, though reduced to extreme weakness, would not consent to remain in bed during the entire day, but usually reclined on the sofa for some hours, where she enjoyed the society and conversation of her family, among

whom she included Herbert Lindsay, who now seldom left the Hall. Between him and Edgar a most sincere friendship existed, and they contemplated its continuance with genuine pleasure.

They were assembled one morning in Mrs. Cameron's dressing room, Herbert had taken his accustomed post by the side of the invalid, and was pouring into her eager ear the blessed words of inspiration; the equally delighted Edgar was imbibing the nourishment flowing from that heavenly stream which could disperse all his sinful misgivings; though, still, the lofty eminence at which he aspired, was lost amidst the depths of futurity. Herbert had been reading the 9th chapter of St. John's Gospel, and Edgar felt its direct application to himself. "Yes," he exclaimed, when his friend's energetic voice had ceased, "*that* is my experience now: like the poor blind sinner *I* too can say that 'one thing I know, that, whereas I *was* blind, now I see.' I see the glory, the majesty, the justice of my God, but, through faith, through the divine instrumentality of the word of God, I can also see the shield of a mediator interposing between the guilty sinner and the demands of Omnipotence. "And yet," he continued, "my coward heart is, at times, still dis-

trustful, and I sometimes fear, that were I to be separated from the society of Christians, I should not retain the privileges I now possess—my armour would rust—or I should rest self-satisfied with the measure of grace to which I have already attained.—“To distrust ourselves,” replied Herbert, “is an injunction which can not be too often set before us. Self-satisfaction and approval has been the ruin of thousands; but, to distrust the power and grace and goodness of God is equally presumptuous:—human nature can do nothing, but Christ can do all;—human nature could in vain essay to overcome any the most trifling temptation—but with the conquering, the all subduing instrument of the grace which Christ imparts, (and which will never be removed from the prayerful penitent,) the warfare will be accomplished. Trust implicitly, trust wholly, trust continually in him, and, my dear Edgar, you need never doubt but he will carry you triumphant through every difficulty.”

“I do not, I can not *now* doubt his illimitable power, Herbert,” replied Edgar, “just as my mind has been opened and warmed to receive him: *He*, I know, abideth, and will abide faithful—but I still fear for myself, when I con-

sider the many who have apparently triumphed over the world and the flesh—yet when they have been drawn from the society of Christian friends, or thrown more on their own resources, they have again returned to their sinful misdoings, and crucified their Saviour afresh, putting him to an open shame.”

“True, too true, my dear Edgar,” said Mr. Cameron; “and, to a young convert, I would earnestly press this fear of falling, as an effectual preventive against it; for this feeling will necessarily teach them to aim at greater purity, and incline them more steadily to keep the commandments of God; and, finding that the obedience necessary to keep the law can not be of themselves, they will be drawn to rest alone on the rock of ages, and, sustained by the outstretched arm of the Most High, they have then no cause to fear.”

“I was led into these remarks, my dear uncle,” said Edgar, “by the receipt of a letter, which has filled me with the most painful inquietude.” He took from his pocket a letter with the Brighton post-mark on it. “From Catharine?” asked Mrs. Cameron, anxiously. Edgar hesitated: he perceived how incautiously he had acted in introducing the subject in his

aunt's presence, without considering her very precarious state. "Edgar," continued Mrs. Cameron, "I am convinced you have heard something which you would keep from me: if it regards Catharine, I entreat you will inform me. Is she ill?"—"My dearest aunt," said Edgar, "how heedlessly I have alarmed you. Catharine I trust is well; this letter regards not her health, but it has alarmed me by the information that she has accompanied a gay and dissipated party to Paris."—"To Paris!" repeated Mr. Cameron; "Edgar, is that possible?" Edgar, in reply, handed the letter to his uncle: it was from Mr. Denham, whose utmost endeavours had been vainly used to dissuade Catharine from so dangerous an expedition; he had urged on her every possible inducement to relinquish it, but Catharine still hardened her heart, and he had been obliged most unwillingly to give up his thankless attempt, satisfied with having warned her of her danger. Since her departure, he had heard, from unquestionable authority, that she had been introduced into a society, every way calculated to exterminate any remaining spark of that holiness she once professed, and that she was being borne along the sweeping vortex of fashion and dissi-

pation, with unconscious rapidity. This report had induced Mr. Denham to write to Edgar on the subject, suggesting the propriety of taking some step to withdraw his sister from such contaminating influence.

This letter greatly alarmed the Camerons. Mrs. Cameron, whose feelings for Catharine had surmounted those of their natural relationship, was much shocked and affected by the afflictive intelligence; her tears flowed fast as she enquired of Edgar what he purposed doing.

“I see but one course for me,” replied Edgar.

“And that course, I suppose,” interrupted Herbert, “deprives us of your society?”

“Assuredly,” replied Edgar. He seemed lost in thought, and evidently unhappy. At length he exclaimed, with much energy, “Oh! Herbert, had I your experience to guide and strengthen me in this trying hour!”

“Edgar,” said Herbert, “trust in God; rely more entirely on Him, and doubt not, but either he will disperse the gathering clouds, or, (if need be,) will impart strength to sustain their effects. I entreat you, place no dependence even on those who have been but weak

instruments in the hands of a gracious God, to draw you towards Him; ‘Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust, also, in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.’ ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very *present* help in trouble.’ Oh! what established ground of confidence have we, if we fearlessly rely on God, the ever-present comforter! *We* can pray for you, Edgar, but we can not follow you, or assist you in this trying duty; but there is an outstretched arm, strong and mighty, ready to lead and support you; embrace that, my dear friend, and fear not.”

Herbert still continued to address him, and Edgar *was* comforted and encouraged; his uncle, too, by his affectionate and godly council, had convinced him how unreasonable were his individual fears. With his usual solicitude, he regretted the peculiar nature of those ties which bound him at that time to home, as it precluded all possibility of his accompanying his nephew, which otherwise he would not have hesitated to do.

“Mention it not, dear Sir,” said Edgar, suddenly roused to a sense of shame in betraying so little faith. “I blush at manifesting so much weakness and fear, when called into the

service of God;—in your prayers,” he added, “I know I shall be thought of.”

“Prayer shall not be wanting, dear Edgar,” said Mrs. Cameron, “prayer to that gracious Father who pitieth his afflicted children, the prayer of a dying mortal whose hopes are fixed on high, shall be poured forth for the recovery of this poor child of the world. It is indeed a sore trial,” she added, greatly affected, “a sore trial to one on the verge of eternity. I had no desire to tarry longer in this tabernacle, but now I trust I must leave this changeful scene—I must quit this mortal body, while yet my kind Catharine is a wanderer from Zion.”

“Despair not, dearest madam,” said Herbert: “think of the gracious promises of God, and be satisfied that in his good time he will fulfil them; think of the many messages of love, and promises of acceptance, he vouchsafed to the rebellious and backsliding children of Israel. ‘I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh.’ And are we not led to expect a gracious answer to the fervent prayers for the

return of such wanderers as have strayed from the fold of God? ‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man,’ we know, availeth much; ‘if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his commandments, him God heareth;’—herein is encouragement to trust in a mercy-loving Saviour; therefore, lay this burden fearlessly on Him, and doubt not but a gracious answer will be given.”

“They are consoling words, dear Herbert,” said Mrs. Cameron, “and of their realization in this dispensation also I will not doubt, but *I* shall never see it.”

“Say not so, dear aunt,” said Edgar, “you will yet, I trust, be spared to glorify God for this also.”

“No, Edgar,” she replied, “I dare not so deceive myself, I feel that it must not be, I feel that temporal things to me will soon be no more; and yet I am again bowed down to the dust—again sinful—ungrateful.” It was evident that the intelligence had much shaken her frame, and would, in all probability, accelerate her departure. Mr. Cameron, fearful of the consequences of pursuing the subject in her presence, requested Edgar to join him in the study, where they could discuss more freely

the most advisable step to be adopted in this perplexing affair.

Fanny, who had, during the conversation, been engaged at her school, and in domestic arrangements, now entered her mother's dressing room; she instantly perceived that some material change had taken place in her beloved parent—her lips were more livid, and her eyes sunken and dull. Herbert saw the effect her mother's altered appearance had on Fanny, and, though the truth he knew would be most painful, he hesitated not to inform her of the cause of this sudden change, and of the course her much beloved-cousin was pursuing.

Fanny had, for the last three nights, taken little rest, her mother's increasing weakness having required her constant attention, and, worn out with anxiety and want of sleep, added to the melancholy intelligence now communicated, completely overpowered her, and sinking on a chair, she wept uncontrolledly. Mrs. Cameron continued, in broken sentences, to express the distress of mind it had imparted to her, alternately praying to the Lord to turn the heart of her erring niece, and expressing her fears for the issue.

“Dear Mrs. Cameron,” said Herbert, af-

fectionately taking her hand, "do not distract your mind by dwelling on this subject; God himself will not leave your most unhappy niece. Edgar, by what I hear, has much influence over her, and, with his present feelings, may, with God's blessing, succeed in drawing her from her present idolatrous pursuits, so that she may yet become 'a new creature,' crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts."

"You are right, Herbert," said the invalid, "I feel, dear Herbert, that you are right; why should I doubt God's willingness to answer my petition? I know that he will hear me, and do for me more than I can ask or think."

"Dwell on that consideration, dear madam," said Herbert, rising to depart, "and the peace which God so long bestowed on you will still be with you. We know, from sad experience, that friends may change, our dearest kindred may wander from their rest, but God can make the crooked paths straight, and the rough places plain, he and he only can make all tend together for good to those who love God."

Herbert was about to depart, but, at the urgent request of his dying friend, he promised not to leave the Hall that day, and went in

search of Mr. Cameron and Edgar, whom he found still discussing the subject. The decision at which they arrived was, that Edgar should start for Brighton the following morning, and, after obtaining every information from Mr. Denham, proceed, as expeditiously as possible, to join his sister, and if he could succeed in drawing her from the baneful society in which she was plunged, it was suggested, as the most adviseable measure, that he should accompany her to Woodville. The gentlemen were interrupted in their conversation by the sound of Mrs. Cameron's bell violently rung. The alarmed husband hastened to the room, where his young friends were shortly summoned. On their entrance, they beheld Fanny on her knees, with a countenance of the keenest anguish, supporting her dying mother, whose head rested on her shoulder. Though so short a period had elapsed since Herbert left the room, the delicate lineaments of his beloved friend had greatly changed—the features were fixed—the eyes glazed and clouded. Conscious of the intense solicitude of her surrounding friends, she raised herself and essayed to speak, but the effort was unavailing; her husband knelt beside the couch, and, in silent sorrow,

clasped the clammy hand extended towards him. Herbert approached: he saw that the taper of existence was fast waning—the soul was struggling to escape from its imprisonment; he leant over the couch, and gently asked, “Is all peace?” A smile of radiant joy illumined his friend’s pale countenance, as she replied, “All is peace.”—“Your Saviour is with you,” continued Herbert, “look to him, he is leading you gently through the dark waters of Jordan;—your Redeemer will point the way to blessedness.”—“Oh! I feel it!” said the struggling soul. She seemed again to rally, and succeeded in addressing a few words to those around her. Looking on her husband and child with a calm countenance, she bade them farewell, earnestly recommending them to sorrow not for her, as though they had no hope, but rather to rejoice when the day of her trial should be over, and her disimprisoned spirit freed from the earthly pressure. She paused—Fanny’s lips were compressed, and her features assumed a settled rigidity. She bent over her mother, who, turning to Edgar, addressed him in most endearing terms; spoke of Catharine’s dereliction, and her own hopes regarding her return to duty, admonished him

to speak comfort to her, and to say, that she died praying for her. "And you, my valued friend," she added, taking Herbert's hand, "I have no words in which to thank you for all your love and kindness;—Christ will reward you, my friend."

"Christ will reward all his followers, dear madam," replied Herbert: "a sure reward he has prepared for them, where, in the realms of perfect light, he will himself wipe away the tears from the faces of all whom he has redeemed from death, and ransomed from the power of the grave. 'They shall blossom with everlasting verdure.'" Herbert ceased, but the fair fabric of mortality heeded it not. One fond look on her best beloved relatives alone testified her consciousness of perception; and, gently reclining back her head on Fanny's extended arm, she faintly murmured, "My Lord and my God;" when, leaving its pitiful tenement, the emancipated spirit took its upward flight to join the ransomed of the Lord.

CHAPTER X.

"Thou art gone to the grave, but 'tis vain to deplore thee,
When God was thy ransom, thy guardian, thy guide;
He gave thee—he took thee—and he will restore thee;
And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died."

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.—
1 *Thess.*, iv. 13, 14.

WHAT can compare with that feeling of isolation and of dreariness which succeeds the removal of a fondly loved friend's remains from before our eyes? The solitariness is *then* most painfully felt—we experience the reality of what till then appeared but as a dream. We have watched, perhaps for many months, over the declining frame of some cherished object of our affection. We have marked, with intense

anxiety, the changes and fluctuations of the treacherous disease, while the alternations of hope and fear agitated our breast—we viewed the finger of dissolution marking its unresisting prey—we saw the gradual approaches of the arrow of death—and yet, we buoyed ourselves up with the hopes (even though hope and probability were arrayed against us) that the feeble light would continue still to flicker—the wasting form would be arrested in its decline,—or assuming strength and power, would triumph over disease and death. We thus hope, willing rather to grasp at uncertainty, than to yield up our minds to the unavoidable reality. But death will not be robbed of its victim;—he sets at nought man’s puny defiance;—he heeds not the agony of surviving friends, but exultingly tears them asunder. At last, the soul is released, and the poor body, with its straitened and ghastly characters, is all that now remains to mark what once was beautiful. We gaze upon the pallid corpse, which requires no longer our anxious attention—we take our accustomed station in the chamber of death, where we were wont to anticipate every desire of our lost companion—we survey the inexpressive features, and are bewildered in the contemplation—we

assume a forced calmness—we experience a degree of painful satisfaction in watching the mouldering clay now free from pain and suffering;—but it is not till that poor mass of mortality is removed from before our eyes—it is not till the yawning grave has embraced our friend, and all the unusual quiet has subsided, that we are overcome with the feelings of isolation. Oh! should we then enter the desolate chamber, do we not feel that we have indeed lost our loved one—the reigning stillness—the chilling regularity and order of every arrangement—the open window, but, above all, the curtainless and deserted bed, are eloquent, though voiceless testifiers of our loneliness. We turn from the chamber which has for us lost all its attractions, and in the desolateness of our heart, we think the world can charm no longer, and we long to lay our head too beneath the heavy sod.

Thus felt, and thus reasoned Fanny Cameron, as she entered the still chamber, while her beloved mother's corpse was borne from the house. This was the first afflictive stroke she had been called upon to endure, and for a while she sank under its pressure. While she could look in her dear parent's face, though arrayed in

the livid hue of death, she could think only of the dear one's release from weakness and from pain;—she could think only of her happy, comforting exit, and join with her father in adoration to the Lord for his unspeakable mercy. Did the consciousness of her own irreparable loss dart through her mind, she would gaze on the still, quiet form before her, and derive comfort from the thought, that that loss was her parent's gain. But now, as she watched from the window the receding forms of the mourners in that funeral cavalcade—as she strained her eyes, to catch a parting glance at the envious coffin, which enclosed the poor body—the thought of all that mother had been to her—of all her tender watchfulness and anxiety—her kind forbearance—her active love—her unremitting instructions—her practical admonitions—these, and much more than these, swelled in her breast, to testify all she had lost. She turned from the window; a feeling of suffocation oppressed her—she grasped the arm of old Cicely, who had followed her to the window, and sunk on her bosom, deprived of consciousness.

Restoratives were administered, but without effect; she continued insensible to every thing.

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The distressed domestics in vain deluged her with water, chafed her hands and temples, and used every means in their power to restore animation; she remained unconscious of their attention. The interment was over, the mourners had returned, and the fond father was quickly summoned to behold the pale inanimate form above. They had carried her into the adjoining dressing-room, and there placed her on the couch so lately occupied by a scarcely more death-like form; her hair hung dripping on her shoulders—the blue veins on her fair brow were more perceptible—her lovely eyes were closed, while their dark silken fringe was moist from the profuse libation she had received. Horror-struck at the sight, Mr. Cameron bent over his treasure in wild dismay; he sunk upon his knees, and pressed his warm cheek to his lovely daughter's; he raised his eyes to heaven, "Merciful Father," he exclaimed, "doom me not to this sad trial, or if it be thy will, thou righteous God," he continued, "give me, oh! give me strength to bear it." A flood of tears came to his relief—the scalding drops rested on the girl's fair cheek, and that animation, which had withstood every effort to renew it, was recalled by the paternal

tear. Fanny opened her eyes, but, as if unwilling to be awakened to a sense of her feelings, she closed them again tightly. Her father now spoke to her in the gentle tones of love; he raised her head, and pillowed it on his own shoulder, endeavouring to comfort her with words which had imparted comfort to his own soul; she listened with calmness, but it was evidently forced; and though she replied to his affectionate enquiries, she manifested no emotion. Herbert and Edgar entered; she held out her hand to each, and regarded their sorrowful countenances with a look of unutterable grief. Herbert had been alarmed by the unnatural calmness she had exhibited during the time her mother's corpse remained in the house, and he had all along feared that it would end thus. He wisely conjectured that tears would more effectually relieve her of the bursting sensations which now oppressed her, than if she were still to continue to stretch her feelings so beyond endurance. To effect this, he entered on a topic of intense interest;—the love the departed mother had ever testified for her dear Fanny;—he expatiated largely on all the demonstrations of attachment, which had come within his know-

ledge—all the acts of tender devotedness he had witnessed. Mr. Cameron and Edgar immediately discerned his kind motive for dwelling on this affecting topic, and as he continued to instance forth the maternal fondness of the departed, they assented to his just remarks, and added their testimony in her favour. The result answered their expectations—the icy chain which had wound round the surcharged heart of the young mourner, melted—tears of kind relief flowed fast—the spell seemed removed, and though her sorrow was still silent, it had chased away the agonizing throb of misery. A tender melancholy succeeded to her late oppressive sensations; the bitterness of grief was past; her truly considerate friends led her gentle spirit to the bright anticipation of a glorious meeting with her parent in the presence of her Redeemer; they pointed to that Saviour, as the Christian's support and comfort under every affliction; they taught her to look from the dear departed friend, to that still dearer, still worthier friend, who died to draw sinners to himself. Fanny *was* comforted, and though she long felt a sad void in her heart, when meditating on her bereavement, still she

could look beyond this sublunary scene, she could picture the blessedness of the saints in light, and there view her glorified parent. The lovely link that bound her with such devotedness to her excellent mother, seemed lengthened but not dissevered—it stretched from time to eternity, and bound her own soul more firmly to the Lord of light, through whose mercy alone the departed had found acceptance.

Fearing the seclusion of Woodville calculated to increase her melancholy, Mr. Cameron proposed returning with Fanny to London, or elsewhere; but she so earnestly pleaded to be allowed to remain in the country, that he relinquished the idea.

Fanny did not urge this request from a desire to gratify her own feelings, by yielding to unavailing regret and sorrow;—no, she was prepared with an effectual remedy against such an indulgence, in continued occupation and activity. To prevent her mind from recurring too frequently to past blessings, she suffered no time to pass unoccupied;—her schools, her pensioners, her home duties, her father's comforts, and her own improvement, were severally and constantly attended to: the result was

beneficial; her cheerfulness returned, and her delighted and grateful parent again beheld the rose of health and contentment blooming, as it was wont, upon her cheek.

CHAPTER XI.

"Man hath a soul of vast desires;
It burns within with restless fires;
Tost to and fro, his passions fly
From vanity to vanity."

"The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes."—*Psalms xxxvi. 1.*

THE day following the interment of his aunt, Edgar Evelyn started for Brighton, on his way to rejoin his sister, in the voluptuous Paris. Arrived in Brighton, he hastened to obtain an interview with his good friend Mr. Denham, who entered warmly into his feelings on the occasion of his present journey, and assisted him greatly by communicating all the particulars with which he was acquainted; from him Edgar learnt, with dismay and much uneasiness, that, ever since his departure from Brighton, Charles Melville had been the chosen friend and

associate of his aunt and sister, and was still with them in Paris. Edgar tarried not; a presentiment of ill seemed to await him, and he felt an inward consciousness that he had acted wrong in leaving his giddy sister, (of whose indecision of character he was fully aware,) just as he again beheld her conforming to the world, and suffering Satan again to hold unmolested possession of her mind. As expeditiously as possible he arrived in Paris, where he lost no time in repairing to the hotel, as directed by Mr. Denham, but was utterly confounded on learning that the party he sought had left Paris some days previous to his arrival. Bewildered at the intelligence, and completely at a loss what plan to adopt, he was slowly returning from the hotel, when he was met by Sir James Merton. Edgar eagerly desired to be directed where to find his aunt and sister. Sir James could give him no information on the subject: he knew they had left the place, but in what direction they had now sped their course, he knew not; he appeared evidently disconcerted and embarrassed when speaking of Catharine; and Edgar soon discovered that the all-accomplished baronet had been an unsuccessful suitor. The discarded beau had not, however, lost his

zest for gaiety and pleasure, and he warmly solicited Edgar to join his party, and remain in Paris a few days; but Edgar was not now the same Edgar Sir James had formerly known, the pursuits and enjoyments he before coveted now appeared mean and despicable in his eyes—the most high God had turned his heart from the puerile and time-serving follies of sin and earth to the ennobling, and exalting, and purifying communion and fellowship of those who walk in the light of the Gospel, looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith, and on this world, not as a place of rest, but of probation. With feelings such as these, leading to that hope that outstrips all the tardy flight of worldly minds, and wings its way above—a hope full of immortality—Edgar could not easily be drawn into a participation of his gay friend's amusements, independent of which, his anxiety regarding his sister made him desirous to hasten his departure as speedily as possible. Uncertain as to her route, Edgar experienced much uneasiness, but, thinking it most probable she had returned to England, he repaired thither without delay, and found on his arrival at his hotel, a letter from Mr. Denham, directing him to his aunt's lodgings. It was very late, but

Edgar felt the painful suspense under which he had been labouring, and could not rest until he had satisfied himself. He was still doomed to disappointment, for, on arriving at the house, he learnt from the servants that the ladies were gone to a large party. Ascertaining the name of their entertainer, and the nature of the entertainment, Edgar found that it was a former intimate acquaintance of his own, who had lately married a fashionable and pleasure-loving beauty, and who delighted to gratify his fair help-mate by ministering to her every fancy. Wearied of the regular routine of common-place ball and supper parties, she longed to give something on a grander and superior scale, and the idea of a masquerade having been suggested by one of her servile flatterers, she rested not until it was accomplished:—her wishes were gratified;—by the assistance of her young friends a theatric entertainment was arranged, which was to be succeeded by a masked ball—the characters were chosen—rehearsals over—dresses finished, and the fair presiding genius seemed at length satisfied.

Edgar, with an oppressed heart, ordered a coach, and drove to the scene of dissipation. The liveried lacqueys—the blaze of light—the

assemblage of carriages—the din of arrivals and announcements, and all the confusion prevalent outside the mansion, were contrasted in Edgar's mind with the lovely quiet he had lately enjoyed in Woodville. His heart sickened, and he was more than once tempted to return, ere he had made his way up the crowded and brilliantly illumined steps; but the thought of his beloved sister, and all the temptations to which she was exposed, gave an impetus to his movements and scarcely could he collect his scattered ideas ere he was ushered into the magnificent reception room. He was immediately recognized, and kindly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Clayton; he enquired of his smiling hostess if his sister was expected? With a very intelligent nod she replied, “*Vous la verrez bientôt, mon ami,*” and tripping lightly away as another name was announced, she transferred her smiles and gratulations to the next arrival.

The greater part of the guests had now adjourned to the theatre; the representation had commenced, and the thunders of applause already echoed through the mansion. Expecting, in every new arrival, to hear his sister announced, Edgar had declined repairing thither; an undefined feeling of evil seemed to oppress

him, and in silent suspense he awaited the issue. As he pensively leant against one of the ornamented pillars that supported the superb roof, and watched the fairy footsteps of his youthful hostess as she gracefully bent to the superficial and adulating crowd, he reflected how fatally the contagion of evil must necessarily spread when assimilated with such attractive forms, and surrounded by such exciting objects; and how difficult it would be, without the grace of God, to resist the influence of the silvery current. The scene he had so lately witnessed at Woodville passed in idea before his eyes, and the awful question naturally suggested itself to his mind, "Were these poor glittering mortals called to their last stage of existence, where could they look for hope?—Alas! alas! to think how they fritter away their little span of being, with no more thought of eternity than the giddy and painted insect they so closely imitate." Edgar's soliloquy was interrupted by a renewed invitation from Mrs. Clayton to accompany her to the theatre; and surmising, from her manner, that something in which he was individually concerned would there transpire, he led his fair companion thither with feelings of unusual depression. The play had

commenced—the scene represented a soft Italian sunset, of exquisite loveliness; the rich verdure—the mellow tints—the rainbow hues—and the beautifully blue sky, were all in unison. A numerous and brilliant audience were assembled, who, on Edgar's entrance, were warmly applauding the heroine of the evening, a fair and lovely girl, who was in the act of gracefully bending to the adulating mockery of the assembled worldlings. Edgar gazed in speechless agony; a cold tremor, as of dissolution, seized him; his fixed stare, compressed lips, and pallid features, betokened his poignant surprise, as he recognized in this unabashed idol of the vacillating throng—this fair paragon of their lavished praises—this brilliant star of the evening—his own much loved sister! In a few moments Edgar recovered his self-possession, and, with it, his usual prompt decision of acting, he darted from the spot on which he stood, bounded over the footlights, and seizing the extended hand of this fair object of attraction, conducted her out of the general gaze of admiration. The action was so rapid and unexpected, that resistance or opposition was impossible, and the bewildered Catharine felt herself encircled in her brother's arms, and surrounded with a wonder-

ing group of dramatis personæ, ere she had power to articulate a word. Miss Evelyn, who had been anxiously watching Catharine's entrée, was speechless with astonishment on witnessing the inopinate appearance of Edgar, and now hurried to the amazed circle to demand an explanation of this extraordinary scene. The agitated Edgar, who still retained his sister's hand within his, suffered not his expecting auditory to remain long in ignorance as to the cause of his abrupt movement. He gently remonstrated with Mr. and Mrs. Clayton for not intimating to him what was approaching; and turning to his sister, with a countenance of deep concern, he exclaimed, "I feel convinced, my dear Catharine, that you will not condemn or regret my recent action, when I inform you that but a few days have elapsed since your worthy, your inestimable aunt, Cameron, breathed her last. My feelings you may, therefore, in part imagine, when I beheld her niece, she for whose best interests her dying breath was given, bowing to the plaudits of a dissipated audience, the unblushing, unshrinking object of worthless admiration." The conscious Catharine had not raised her eyes to meet her brother's look; she felt her own delinquency, and knew how con-

temptible she must appear in the eyes of her best friends; but pride struggled with ingenuousness, and kept her silent: the mention of her aunt's dissolution had for a moment recalled her better feelings, but she tried again to steel her heart against their influence. Edgar, who saw the struggle, and felt the peculiarity of her situation, urged her to accompany him home; and while Catharine retired to disrobe herself for that purpose, Miss Evelyn, who had (much against her inclination) been a tacit spectator of the scene, now addressed Edgar with much warmth, accusing him of unkindness and want of feeling towards his sister, in making so public a display of his sentiments; she exonerated Catharine from all impropriety of conduct, (on the score of wanting in respect to her deceased aunt,) alleging their total ignorance of the occurrences at Woodville, and again loudly condemned Edgar for his recent conduct. Edgar pleaded the surprise which Catharine's appearance had occasioned,—that in the then excited state of his own feelings he could see no other alternative; he acknowledged that Catharine might have been spared so painful a scene had Mrs. Clayton prepared him previously for what was to follow, but that, as it was, he should

have deemed himself most unjustifiable, had he refrained, through punctilio, from that which duty as well as affection imperatively urged. After a short interval Catharine returned; and, perhaps, for the first time in his life Edgar Evelyn's departure was hailed with much satisfaction by a gay and modish assembly; his determined and lofty manner had impressed them with a sensation of uneasiness, and they one and all felt relieved of an intolerable burden, as Edgar, bowing with a constrained and distant air, offered his arm to his sister, and, followed by Miss Evelyn, left the theatre.

Scarcely had they departed when the revelry, which had been so inopportunately disturbed, was resumed with redoubled vigour. The absence of their prima donna must necessarily suspend the theatric vision—the tragic scene must close—but could not the lagging, hateful time be equally destroyed? Assuredly; and in the fancy ball which succeeded, the motley group forgot in their own sensual enjoyments the sorrows of their fair friend, whom they had but now overwhelmed with applause. Such is the heartlessness of the votaries of fashion! such the versatility of the world's followers!

As Edgar was conducting his sister down the

grand staircase, rendered dazzling by the suspended lustres and variegated lamps, he heard a rapid step descending after him; and with no very gentle tap on the shoulder he was accosted with, "You are so wrapt up in your heroics to-night, my good Orestes, that your faithful Pylades is overlooked." He turned, and beheld Charles Melville, who grasped his hand with all the warmth their former intimate acquaintance warranted. "Why, Edgar, my good fellow," he continued, "what possessed you, to make such a quixotic exhibition this evening. I verily thought the days of enchantment were revived, when I beheld my pseudo friend, whom I pictured in some Arcadia a hundred miles from hence, bounding with mercurial flight."—"Cease, Melville, I entreat," interrupted Edgar, with unusual harshness; "the events of this evening have so unnerved me, that such trifling seems insupportable." Melville, without noticing Edgar's remark, leant across to Catharine, "Now, fair lady," he exclaimed, "acknowledge your scepticism;—said I not that the pure air of Somersetshire would work a marvellous change? Now, I'd wager a trifle, that some fairy has been busy with her magic wand; and in the soft retirement of a lovely

vale has had ample opportunities for the exercise of her powers, and having first purified the evil inclinations, and tamed the unruly spirit of her disciple, she has, at length, with smiling willingness, listened to the soft confessions of the gentle youth? Is it not so, Edgar!"

Time was when Edgar could little have brooked such contumelious language, could ill have borne the sarcastic expression depicted in Melville's eye: but that gospel of the Redeemer, which had turned him from the power of Satan unto God, enabled him, in the strength of that spirit to put a bridle on his tongue, and to subdue his rising ire; he remembered the apostle's injunction, "as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," and commanding his indignation, he replied to Melville, "that he could not then and there satisfy him on the subject, but that elsewhere he hoped to deceive him." They had adjourned to one of the withdrawing rooms, waiting till Miss Evelyn's carriage should be announced; here a burst of mirth from the assembly-room was heard. "Your friends, Catharine," exclaimed Edgar, "are, methinks, little regardful of the absence of their theatric star. Hark!" he continued, as a louder peal echoed through the mansion,

“how well they repay your kind devotion!” He looked at Catharine,—she appeared agitated and uneasy; and, bursting into tears, she exclaimed, “I wanted not this additional infliction to render my feelings most uncomfortable.” At this moment, to the relief of all parties, the carriage was announced. “I shall see you to-morrow, Edgar,” said Melville, as the carriage door was closed; and, ascending the steps, he joined the revellers above.

Miss Evelyn was highly incensed at her nephew’s conduct, and took little pains to disguise her feelings; but Edgar’s dispassionate and determined manner disarmed her soon of all resentment. On their return home, he described the affecting scene he had so lately witnessed at Woodville, depicted the blessed exit of his kind aunt, and the pious resignation of her bereaved relatives; but when he repeated her parting address to himself, and her affectionate remembrance of her forgetful niece, Catharine’s sorrow knew no bounds, and Edgar, from being the reprover, was compelled to become the comforter.

Edgar mentioned his uncle’s desire and request that Catharine should return with him to Woodville, but (as he expected) Miss Evelyn

loudly declaimed against it; and though Catharine was silent on the subject, it was evident the proposal was not pleasing to her. "You are silent, Catharine," exclaimed Edgar: "am I to infer that the vain and paltry amusements of the town can offer any equivalent in your mind for the loss of your cousin's society, or the gratification you might confer by being with her? Catharine wished to conciliate her brother, whose mind she soon discovered had received a different bias since they last met, but she was unwilling to yield her own inclination in order to satisfy him. She replied, "to gratify you, Edgar, I would do much; but you are in error if you imagine my society would be at all prized by Fanny, or my uncle, who, from their studied indifference of late, would evidently derive no satisfaction in a visit from me." Edgar was amazed at such a declaration, the more so when he considered the uniform neglect with which Catharine had treated all Fanny's letters. He begged an explanation. Catharine referred him to the time Melville had visited Woodville, and the extreme coolness then testified for her by all the family. Edgar looked distressed and bewildered. "What visit?" he asked quickly. "What visit!" replied Miss Evelyn, evidently

much raised, "Why, Edgar, you seem completely at cross purposes to-night; surely you are not quite so oblivious as to forget what occurred not two months since." Catharine explained to her brother that it was Charles Melville whom she had authorized to intimate her intention of visiting Woodville, previous to her meditated excursion to Paris, and from him she had received Edgar's letter dissuading her from the journey, and recommending and approving her preconcerted plan.

Great was the astonishment and dismay of the ladies, when Edgar positively denied either seeing Melville or writing by him, and this he said with so much appearance of truth, that his veracity was unquestioned. Having ascertained that Edgar had not left Woodville during the period in question, they began to imagine that some deception must have been practised upon them;—to doubt Edgar was impossible, and to question Melville's conduct equally so: but how was the deceit effected? Edgar requested to see the letter supposed to be written by him, and while Catharine was absent, in search of it, Miss Evelyn informed him that Melville had been for some time Catharine's declared admirer, that Catharine had written,

ere she left Paris, to apprise him of it, and urge his speedy return to them, from a wish to obtain his approbation and consent to their marriage, which Melville was anxious to conclude as speedily as possible. This communication, though not unexpected, was most painful, and as Edgar paced the room while his aunt continued to pour forth her unwelcome intelligence, Catharine entered with the letter in her hand. "Catharine," said Edgar, taking the letter from her, and conducting her to a seat, "I have been put in possession of most unwelcome intelligence, but I should for ever condemn myself, were I, through the fear of imparting some transient pangs, to hesitate one moment in opening your eyes to the character of your friend, Charles Melville, who, if his principles and habits are unchanged, (and that they are not, the events of this memorable evening will testify,) is totally unworthy of your regard. I judge not rashly or hastily, my dear aunt," he continued, perceiving Miss Evelyn about to interrupt him; "many years close, *too* intimate, fellowship with Melville, authorizes me thus to speak." Catharine burst into tears, and Miss Evelyn, highly incensed at Edgar's language, loudly condemned him. But Edgar heeded it

not:—his sister's danger seemed imminent, and he felt that he must necessarily be accessory to it if, in such a moment, he allowed his sensibility to overcome the dictates of duty and truth. He resolved, at all hazards, to display, in their legitimate colours, Melville's base principles and infidel opinions, and though he drew a veil over many flagrant acts of vice that had come within his own knowledge, he did not shrink from pointing out to his sister the awful precipice on which she now so thoughtlessly stood. Catharine heard him in silence, but it was more the silence of sullenness than conviction; though unsatisfied with regard to the mystery of the letter, she was determined not to credit any aspersions cast on Melville, while yet an undefined dread forbade her to enquire more on the subject, lest it should tend to criminate him.

“Oh, Catharine!” proceeded Edgar, “painful as may be the struggle, believe me I advise only for the promotion of your happiness; surely, no other motive could induce me thus to expose to your view the vices of one who, for so many years, was my close companion and friend; one whom, until lately, I falsely imagined was entitled to my respect and admi-

ration: and now—how is he fallen!—And yet, my dear Catharine, but for the undeserved grace of a mercy-loving God, your unworthy brother would be equally contemptible.”

Edgar now again urged Catharine's departure from the soul-debasing and unhallowed society into which she had plunged herself; he affectionately reminded her of that short period when she had professed to believe that the glory of God was the end of her being; he appealed to her conscience to justify his assertion of the insufficiency of her present pursuits to bestow happiness or peace of mind; he placed before her the frail tenure of our thread of existence, and he warned her of the terror-striking judgment beyond. But Catharine hardened her heart and would not be convinced; in vain Edgar displayed the peace and happiness which he had felt and seen in Woodville, in vain he offered her the same charms, in the society of her friends, amidst scenes of rural retirement and contentment. Catharine remained impenetrable; and, as a last resource, Edgar proceeded to the perusal of the still-unopened letter he held in his hand. He read it attentively more than once.—Catharine, in the mean time, breathless with agitation and suspense,

gazed intently at him—he was evidently much pained. “Catharine,” he at length exclaimed, “’tis as I feared; you have been shamefully imposed on by a specious hypocrite, his gross imposition I now plainly detect.” The agony of Catharine’s look affected him. “My dearest Catharine,” he continued, “at the time that production was supposed to have emanated from my pen, I was daily obtaining (I trust) a heartfelt conviction of Gospel truths, and a knowledge of my Saviour: can it, therefore, be a reasonable supposition, that, while pressing forwards heavenward, I could descend to pen such frivolous, such miserable lines?” Catharine pressed her hand on her eyes, but still continued pertinaciously silent. “Catharine,” resumed Edgar, “you know not the agony I experience in thus afflicting you, but, oh! steel not your heart against conviction; you have been deceived and imposed on, but if you continue to wrap up your soul against the approaches of light and reason, how fearful must be the issue. I see you are still doubtful, what can I do more?”

“Edgar,” said Catharine at length, “I can not, nay, I will not yet believe, that Melville,

whom I considered, with all his faults, the very soul of honour and of truth, could thus debase his noble mind. I am convinced, though the circumstances seem startling, that he never wrote that letter, and that, if I have been deceived, he has been no less so." Miss Evelyn placed her hand on Edgar's shoulder: "Would it not," she exclaimed, "be dishonourable and despicable, to condemn a friend unheard? Charles Melville may, for aught you know, be able satisfactorily to explain away all that at present appears enigmatical and dark; his statement of the case may impress us with very different feelings."—"Dear aunt!" said Catharine, with affectionate gratitude.

Edgar felt deeply for his sister. "You are right, aunt," said he; "and possibly it is not too late to obtain that desirable satisfaction to-night; Melville, I am convinced, will lose no time in joining us, were I to write for him."—"Do so, dear Edgar," said Catharine, greatly agitated. "On one condition alone," returned he, "which is, that if we discover Melville to be the author of this base deception, you will not hesitate to accompany me to-morrow, or, at farthest, the day following, to Woodville."

Catharine held out her hand to her brother, and unhesitatingly promised to comply with so reasonable a condition.

Edgar wrote a hasty note, and despatched it immediately. As he had conjectured, Melville was as expeditious as they could desire; with high raised hopes, confiding in the strength and fervor of Catharine's attachment, he now dreaded not detection, but one glimpse at the overclouded countenance of his fair friend prepared him for something less pleasing. Edgar immediately charged him with the offence, and, not being prepared to refute it, he resolved to brave its exposure, and to make it evident, to Catharine at least, that so unworthy an expedient was but the natural consequence of his unequalled love for her. Apparently, therefore, with the most perfect ingenuousness, he instantly, on being questioned by Edgar, acknowledged the deceit, and his motives for it; alleging that he was fully convinced, had Catharine gone to Woodville, or even received a letter from thence, it would have materially altered her purpose, and affected his happiness; he foresaw that her visit to Paris would have been prohibited, and he most solemnly assured

his hearers, that he was actuated merely and purely from a desire to ensure her enjoyment in their meditated trip to Paris, added to his own fear lest they should be separated.

With Miss Evelyn this plausibility had the desired effect. Melville had always been an extreme favourite with her, and she was readily inclined to consider the affair, even at the most, as a venial trespass, to which his love for Catharine was a sufficient motive; she therefore now entered warmly into his defence. Not so Catharine, though agitated by conflicting emotions, her pride would not suffer her to brook the artifice of which she was the unsuspecting dupe; and though Melville continued eloquently and passionately to appeal to her feelings, she had penetration sufficient to detect the secret main-spring of the base deception, and spirit to resent it. A warm debate ensued between Edgar and Melville, the former peremptorily prohibiting any further communication between Melville and his sister, and Melville persisting in requiring a dismissal only from her own lips. Catharine at length ended the dispute, by expressing her firm resolution of leaving town the following day, intimating,

that any further attempt to change her resolve would be useless and unnecessary. Melville departed in no enviable state of feelings at finding so determined an opposition to his wishes, but secretly resolving on not immediately relinquishing the only feasible prospect he beheld of averting the long impending stroke which threatened him.

The following day Miss Evelyn and her niece, with feelings evidently not of the most friendly nature, separated; and Catharine, with an assumed resignation, accompanied her brother into Somersetshire.

CHAPTER XII.

"I lying vanities believed,
And trusted most where most deceived."

'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.'—*John* v. 40.

THERE are some haughty and arrogant spirits who, when thwarted in their schemes of happiness, or overcome by some unlooked for disappointment, are satisfied to endure in silence, but without the slightest feeling of submission; their predominating characteristic is pride; they seemingly acquiesce in the unavoidable dispensation, but in reality they are rebels to the power which deprives them of their fancied good; and though they are necessitated to *bear* its withdrawal, were they to examine their own hearts they would perceive the incipient stirrings of sin, which arrays itself against the

justice of Jehovah, arraigning his attributes, and opposing his omnipotence.

Catharine Evelyn was precisely in this situation for some time after her arrival in Woodville. Though she seemed to have dismissed religion entirely from her thoughts, and turned in disgust from the mention of it, still she affected a resignation she neither felt, or desired to feel; and though desirous to be looked upon as a patient sufferer under heaven's decrees, she knew too truly that her heart accorded not with the will of God, and she hourly sighed for the worldly enjoyments she appeared so contentedly to have resigned. It was well that in the peaceful seclusion of Woodville she found no field for the display of religious feeling, else it is possible the active, though heartless line of conduct, pursued by her in Brighton, might have been again repeated. Here were no opportunities of eliciting praise for acts of benevolence—no unmerited applause to compensate for personal privation; here every thing was real, was genuine; human nature was divested of all merit, all claim to any thing like reward: the love of Christ alone constrained the peaceful inhabitants of the hall to active exertion; they looked for an enduring reward—a reward

not of debt, but of *grace*. To Catharine, the dull monotony of the life she now led was most irksome; she longed to return to town,—but to act in direct opposition to her fond brother was not to be thought of. She secluded herself as much as possible from the family circle; and, though repeatedly and affectionately urged by Fanny to become a participator in all her delightful sources of enjoyment, Catharine shunned the subject—she would spend the entire day in a state of listless indifference, as though existence itself was a drudgery. Her uncle, her brother, and occasionally Herbert Lindsay, warmly expostulated with her, pointing out the equal sinfulness of her present as her former line of conduct, and pressing on her the awful tendency of such rebellious feelings,—but she profited not by their kind endeavours; she listened with indifference, or replied with scorn.

Edgar, who had lingered at Woodville longer than he originally proposed, shortly announced the necessity for his leaving his kind friends. Knowing how requisite his influence and presence would be among his own tenantry, he felt that he had too long been an absentee; and his kind friends, while they participated in his regret at leaving the hall, did not wish to offer any

inducement that might incline him to neglect so imperious a duty. The little family, including Herbert, were seated in the parlour, when Edgar made known this resolve. The evening was fast closing in—signs of approaching winter were perceptible around—the trembling leaves, those silent emblems of mortality, in rapid succession drooped and fell, mournfully depopulating their frail abodes until their vernal tenants should appear.

The chillingness of the aspect without had drawn some of the party towards the genial hearth; but Catharine, with her cheek resting on her hand, sat in gloomy silence at the window, apparently contemplating the changed scene before her, totally indifferent to the calm and holy conversation of her friends. Herbert rose and approached the window, and stood for awhile silently watching the light and withered leaves, as they flutteringly strewed the open pathway. “To a contemplative mind, Miss Evelyn,” he at length exclaimed, “these are solemn warnings,” pointing to the leafless branches, and the wreck of their once beautiful habiliments. “How forcibly do they call on us to consider our latter end! how truly do they teach us the vanity of human possessions; and

still it is much to be lamented that there are few, comparatively *very few*, who profit by their silent call. Were a voice given them, oh! how eloquently would they plead to the giddy multitude, ‘Love not the world, neither the things of the world.’ Rely not on your supposed stability—you, like ourselves, are fast approaching towards dissolution; but, unlike us, *you* have a soul to be saved, a Saviour to seek, an eternity to inhabit—you, like us, may have been admired, and envied, and flattered, and caressed; but unlike us, your existence ends not here—you must be raised from the dead, to be arraigned at Jehovah’s throne.” Herbert was proceeding, but Catharine interrupted him by observing that the subject of her last half hour’s meditation bore some analogy to the ideas he had now put forth; she too, had been led, while gazing on the falling leaves, to consider the mutability of human enjoyments, and had at length arrived at the final conclusion, that happiness so short-lived and transitory could never be hers. Herbert begged her to define her ideas of happiness. Catharine smiled, and hesitated. “Our ideas,” she at length replied, “are, I know, widely dissimilar on that head. I can readily conceive, that were I

to enquire your sources of happiness, you would reply, 'Religion;' but though, in the eyes of Woodville's favoured inhabitants, it must appear a monstrous declaration to assert the inefficacy of *that* to satisfy the mind, still experience has shewn me that it is even so."

"And now, Miss Evelyn," enquired Herbert, "allow me again to ask from whence *you* would derive happiness?"—"Pardon me," said Catharine, "I feel so satisfied that my views are not in accordance with yours, that I will not rouse either your indignation or contempt, by enumerating what I deem conducive to happiness, suffice it that your grand panacea failed to impart it."—"Oh! grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, Miss Evelyn," returned Herbert, "by imputing to religion the failings which alone belong to sinful mortality, and bear with me when I assert my belief, that you never felt its vital influence, or you would not thus pervert its power, and deny its blessed effects. It is sadly evident that you have never comprehended the love of Christ, have never fully known the truth as it is in Him. The spirit of your mind is still unrenewed, otherwise you would not continue still to walk in darkness, 'denying the power of godliness.'" Seeing a

cloud on Catharine's brow, Herbert continued, "Possibly, Miss Evelyn, you conceive that I overstep the bounds ministerially prescribed to me, in speaking in such unqualified terms; but I can imagine no circumstances which (as an ambassador of my Saviour) should incline me to compromise the truth, or to conceal this real state from an erring soul."

Catharine replied, that she could not feel offended at Mr. Lindsay's discharging what he conceived to be a paramount duty, at the same time intimating that he would save himself a world of trouble by avoiding the subject, as light and darkness were not more at variance than their feelings.

Undaunted by this repulse, Herbert continued his remarks; and, finding that Catharine, who had at first listened to him merely through complaisance, now seemed to take some interest in the conversation, he exclaimed, "Oh, Miss Evelyn, as you value your never-dying soul's salvation, flee not in semblance, but in reality, to Christ for refuge and for aid—his grace is sufficient for you—his mercy is exhaustless—his love illimitable." He opened his little pocket bible. "Listen to the words of inspiration! hark, how the Almighty reasons with

you! ‘Turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?’ ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.’ Behold, how sweetly he entreats you: ‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ ‘Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.’ And, oh! how fearfully he warns you, ‘The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people who forget God.’ ‘The soul that sinneth, it shall die.’ Are not these fearful denunciations? Yet they are the infallible records of God’s own word, and not an iota of them will fail. Do not deceive yourself; be persuaded that pure genuine religion is not, as you assert, a mere *ignis fatuus*, and light that burns, then flickers, and is gone. Oh, no! undefiled religion, the religion of the Christian, is not a mere assent to a code of laws—not a spiritless, heartless service—it is a permanent, a saving faith in God, as our creator, governor, and father; in Christ, as the Son of his love, equal in power and glory, who before the foundations of the world was fore-ordained to be the Saviour and Redeemer of sinful mortality; and in the blessed Spirit, a distinct person in this mysterious Trinity, very and eternal God, whose office it is to en-

noble, and sanctify, and purify the heart, fitting it for the reception of the majesty on high. The heart subdued through this influence no longer remains at enmity with God, but, enriched with the fulness of Christ's propitiation, is, through faith in that Saviour, reconciled to the justice-loving God; but, without this real invigorating principle, without this heartfelt and inward subjugation, the sinner is still dead in trespasses and sins."

"I have heard all this, times without number," replied Catharine, "and though I was once little inclined to doubt the unlimited power you attribute to the Spirit, and would even have spoken experimentally of its real effects, I cannot now so fully embrace the doctrine, having discovered it to be a mere illusion."—"Beware, Miss Evelyn," said Herbert, "lest, in restricting the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, you do not overturn the entire fabric, and demolish the ground-work of Christianity, and raze to the dust every stone of the blessed superstructure. Trace his wonder-working effects on the hearts and lives of the Lord's disciples, as you read in the Acts of the Apostles. To the believers in the Corinthian church, St. Paul writes, 'Know you not that ye are the

temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.' He has the same power, the same attributes as God, which are abundantly proved by Scripture evidence. Read them, I entreat you, in God's holy law; study, with prayer, to comprehend the length and breadth of that sanctifying power, and you will, ere long, cease to rob him of his high prerogatives, only because the knowledge of him transcends your reasoning faculties. Where then were the exercise of faith, if the children of pollution were to reject every thing as against reason, because it is above reason? Where were the evidence of things not seen, if we refused to believe any thing but the things of sight.

"True, true," said Catharine; "but, if the Spirit has such powers, how do you account for those defalcations in holiness, of which we hear so often? why is there any defection? why are the souls, who are supposed to be under its influence, seen to start aside and revolt, returning with renewed avidity towards the things they had before relinquished?"—"Because they quenched or resisted the Spirit," replied Herbert: "man, as a rational and accountable being, is endowed with the knowledge of good and evil, and without baffling or contravening

the grace of God, or frustrating his pre-existent determinations, is free to reject or embrace the offers of salvation, is equally at liberty to open his heart to the influence of the Holy Spirit, or to shut his eyes against the revelation of God, and bow the knee to the image of Baal. Thus we see many, who began in the Spirit, end in the flesh; but no believer is compelled against his will to abandon the service of the living God, and turn idolater: the conquest of Satan over the souls of such is easy, because they are led willing captives; they unresistingly surrender to the evil inclinations of the natural heart, and are satisfied to become traitors to the cause of Christ."

Catharine shook her head. "I can not," she said, "bow with implicit deference to your remarks, Mr. Lindsay, for I do not conceive that any one would willingly accept the evil and refuse the good, were they not impelled by a force superior to their own."—"We know, Miss Evelyn," continued Herbert, "that the natural heart is evil, and prone to sin; it is inclined to wickedness and darkness, and in its unrenewed state is in a perpetual warfare with its Maker. Should it then be thought surprising, that, though for a time we may appear to

aspire heavenward, still, that that inherent taint, which cleaves to all of Adam's race, should again lead us astray and incline us to deviate from the path of holiness?"

"But," said Catharine, "we implanted not this enmity to God in our own natures, for you say, man was at first created in righteousness and true holiness?"—" 'Tis true," returned Herbert: "man was originally formed an upright and perfect being, in the likeness and image of his Maker, endowed with faculties to glorify that being, and possessed of transcendent happiness. But sin entered the world, and man died. Satan, the prince of the power of darkness, blinded the hearts of our first parents, and they wilfully disobeyed the commandment of God, and so entailed death and misery upon all succeeding generations.

"Then," remarked Catharine, "is it not presumptuous to suppose that their descendants can resist the influence of the tempter when the perfect beings just created from God's own hands were deluded and deceived?"—"It might seem presumptuous and impossible," replied Herbert, "did we not, while reading the just disgrace of man, and the holy wrath of God, behold the merciful and irreversible decree, that

(the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.' Poor fallen man saw the sacrifice yet afar off, and believed—and by faith was saved. Christ came into the world to destroy the power of Satan, to open a door of deliverance to all those who were led captive by him—to overcome death, and spread wide the gates of everlasting life. This emancipation from our spiritual enemy can only be obtained through Jesus Christ, and though every son of Adam must be still tainted with the pollutions and stains of entailed sin, they are not (blessed be God) compelled unresistingly to continue in the service of Satan;—the Saviour has cancelled their debt, and if they unreservedly surrender their hearts and affections to him, their sin will be remembered no more, the righteousness of Christ will be imputed to them, and the atonement he offered will be esteemed a sufficient propitiation; the saving grace of God will be manifest on every sinner that turns to Christ, and the hand-writing of ordinances that was against him will be blotted out, Christ having nailed it to his cross."

Catharine's attention seemed now entirely wrapt up in the subject: she continued long silent; at length she exclaimed, "Still, Mr.

Lindsay, I am at a loss to know how it is possible for us (who, as you observe, are naturally so prone to deceive ourselves,) to discover, whether we are really acting under the influence of the Spirit, or are but following the inclinations of our own will?"

"Need I remind you, Miss Evelyn," returned Herbert, "that the Christian has an infallible directory—a blessed touchstone, by which to judge himself—to weigh his actions, and, above all, his hidden motives, for such actions; the word of God will be to him the only safe criterion; that will be his study, his only source of comfort, his spring of joy. He will, by that, experience and judge himself, but it will be with much serious meditation and heartfelt prayer, lest he may wrest its meaning or pervert its truths, drawing it down to the standard of his own convenience. Pardon me, Miss Evelyn," continued Herbert, "for observing what I feel convinced must now appear evident to yourself, that you have been satisfied to adopt merely the language of religion, without discerning its vital influence. Religion, to be of avail, must be embraced in the spirit, for it is a spiritual soul-sustaining principle. Christ must be all, or is nothing; if we look for power, or grace, or

goodness in ourselves, or in any thing out of Christ, we are none of his. Ever bear in mind, that the body is dead because of sin, that in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, that Christ's blood alone can cleanse from sin, Christ's righteousness alone justify the condemned sinner. Why then grovel longer in sense and dust? why attach merit to a sinner's services? Study to know the preciousness of Christ, and the Holy Spirit will then make known to you all your short comings. And oh! think not now, because you have for a season abandoned the pernicious playhouse, the soul-killing card-table, or the fascinating joys of ungodliness, that it is an evidence of your obedience to God; for, bear well in mind, that if you are not walking by faith in the Son of God, you are still walking in sin."

Catharine seemed awed by the solemnity of Herbert's manner, but continued silent. The conversation soon became general, and Herbert took his leave.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Grace is a plant where'er it grows
Of pure and heavenly root,
But fairest in the youngest shows,
And yields the sweetest fruit."

"Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.."—*Matt.* xi. 25.

A FEW days after the conversation recorded in our last chapter, Edgar left the Hall. His absence was sensibly felt by all the inmates, and especially by his uncle, whose affection for him was daily increasing. Edgar took a grateful leave of his excellent friend Herbert, earnestly entreating him to continue his kind solicitude for the eternal welfare of his dear sister, and not to be deterred by her subbornness or indifference from tendering to her his advice and exhortations.

Herbert continued to persevere in his solemn

undertaking, aided by the unremitted exertions of Mr. Cameron, and Catharine as perseveringly steeled her heart against the influence of the blessed truths they proclaimed.

It is possible she might have given more attention to the awful subject pressed on her by her friends, had not her thoughts been again directed at this time to events more attractive and engrossing. She had of late received repeated letters from her aunt, urging her return to town, accusing her of having acted with inconsistency and lightness, in regard to Melville, whose grief and despair she pictured as extreme; she entreated her to be satisfied with the resentment she had already shown, in so absurd an affair, and to throw aside her caprice. Notwithstanding these successive attacks, Catharine remained firm to her purpose; the receipt of a letter, however, from Melville himself, written in all the language of passion, had nearly achieved the victory. Her uncle and cousin were both out when she received this, and the struggle in her mind was great; one moment she blamed herself for the hastiness with which she left London, and the next, she felt satisfied that the double-dealing of Melville deserved no better treatment; at one moment she

resolved to brave the reproaches of her friends, and (as she was forced to confess) of her own conscience, and yield to the whispers of her lingering affection; but though blinded and darkened by prejudice, her mind revolted at such a procedure, and, unable to decide in so trying a temptation, she resolved to ask and abide by her cousin's advice and counsel.

She was told that Fanny was busily engaged in her school; thither she hurried. Fanny was not there, but though disappointed in the object of her search, she lingered unwittingly on the threshold, forgetting, for a time, her own uneasiness, in the contemplation of the interesting group of happy ones there assembled. To her interrogatories concerning her cousin, the mistress of the school replied, that Fanny had left the school early in order to visit one of the children, who, it was expected, was now on her death-bed. "Indeed, Miss," continued she, "it is a blessed sight now to behold Rachel Smith, the little dying sufferer, and to see what the power of God's Spirit can effect in the heart. A few months ago, Miss, that child was a source of the greatest trouble to us all, no one could manage her—she was the most stubborn, self-willed mortal you ever saw. Threats or kind-

ness, or punishment, or reward, were all the same to her. All her playfellows were afraid of her; in the neighbourhood she went by the name of the little tyrant. But, Miss, sometime before this illness took her, she became (blessed be God) quite an altered creature—her little heart was changed, she loved to hear Miss Cameron talk to her about her Saviour, and the happiness prepared for the Lord's people; from being idle and negligent she became attentive and studious; she was always the first in her place in school, reading her bible, and indeed I believe it has seldom been out of her hands many hours for the last two months." The good woman had thus run on without considering that she was detaining Catharine, when seeing her about to speak, she began to apologize for her loquacity, offering her a young guide to conduct her to Rachel Smith's. Catharine told her she was in no hurry, and really felt much interested in the account she had just given her of Rachel Smith; she begged, however, to know what evidence so young a child could possibly give that she was the subject of grace.

"I'll tell you, Miss," said the woman, evidently much gratified in having an opportunity of enlarging on her favourite topic. "About

twelve months ago this child had a first attack of the complaint which it is now God's will to lay on her, she was then confined for four or five weeks to her bed, but such an impatient, obstinate, wicked little being, I never saw; she would neither take food or medicine but as she was forced, and her poor mother's heart was nigh broken from listening to her dreadful screams and cries; but now, Miss, as you will see if you go there, she is become as patient and gentle as a lamb, never murmuring or complaining, although sometimes her pains are so acute that she is forced to moan and cry, but she tries to be calm, and to appear as though she doesn't suffer at all, though sometimes I have seen the large drops standing on her poor forehead; she continually exclaims, 'Blessed Lord, give me patience;' and I have known her even when in great pain begin to sing some of the little hymns taught her here by Miss Cameron: when she hears some of her neighbours pitying her, and sees how unhappy her poor mother looks, she says, 'Oh, mother, don't think of my pain, I don't mind the pain, for I think how much more my Saviour bore for me.' 'Blessed child,' added the poor woman, wiping her eyes, 'I trust God will lead you safely to

your rest.' Now, Miss, is not this an evidence that the Holy Spirit of God must dwell in her, for we know she couldn't do this of herself—she must be united to Christ, and abide in him, for the Saviour of the world said, 'he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.'"

"But, my good woman," said Catharine, "we often hear of those bringing forth fruit who have no true connection with Christ as their spiritual vine."

"Ah! Miss," replied the woman, "but what kind of fruit is that? it doesn't spring of faith in the Son of God, and so must have the nature of sin, such don't see the true light—they don't act only for the love of Christ, for they still love sin, and though they may say the contrary, they must feel like the poor Pharisees, who trusted that their works and merits would help to save their souls. I often heard Mr. Lindsay say, Miss, that the soul who doesn't daily feel the grievous burden of sin, cannot work the works of faith, nor find acceptance with God, and that nothing gives more satisfaction to our spiritual enemy than when we endeavour to lay claim to God's promises through our own merits." Catharine fully assented to the truth

of Mr. Lindsay's remarks, and after repeating to the woman how much interest she took in what she had heard regarding Rachel Smith, she accepted the promised guide, and took the road to the cottage. A few minutes' walk brought them to the door of widow Smith's cottage; it was a poor, badly-thatched dwelling, standing remote from any other house, but, though the abode of poverty and sickness, it had about it an appearance of cleanliness which spoke well of its inhabitants. To the world, this mean and isolated habitation had nothing in it to attract admiration or attention; but God, who seeth not as man seeth, had there shed the brightness of his presence, had there testified his influence, and had from thence chosen and called one who was hereafter to become a bright jewel in a Saviour's crown.

The door was partly open, and Catharine could distinguish voices in the inner room. She hesitated to enter, until surmising from the prolonged conversation that Fanny must be there, she opened the door softly, and entered. The apartment was vacant, and Catharine, having dismissed her young guide, seated herself silently. She was soon attracted by the voices of children in the adjoining room, close to the

door of which she was seated, and her mind became soon so absorbed in their converse, that she utterly forgot the purport of her visit and her late great uneasiness. A weak, and evidently very young voice was endeavouring to impress on some hearer, with much earnestness, the momentous truths of the Gospel, and the unexampled love which Christ bears to poor souls. The first connected sentence that Catharine distinguished was, "Dear Susy, is it not great joy to hear from God's own word what Christ said to his disciples, that he would not leave them comfortless, but would send the Comforter to them; now, Susan, do you remember how sweetly Miss Cameron told us, just now, who this Comforter was? that he was the blessed Spirit who changes our hearts and leads us to Christ, and that we, none of us, will get to heaven if we don't feel that he can and has changed us and our wicked hearts." The listener replied, but in so low a tone that Catharine lost it. "Oh! Susan," said the first speaker, "continue to love your school when I am gone; continue to love dear good Miss Cameron, who so kindly teaches and talks to you, but above all, and before all, love your Saviour, God's only Son, Jesus Christ, who came into the world to

save sinners. Oh! if you love him, Susan, you need never be afraid, for he will always be with you; and if he takes charge of you, none can pluck you out of his hand. Will you, Susan, will you come to Jesus Christ?"—"Oh! I will try, Rachel," replied a voice half choking with sobs. "That's my own dear Susy," returned the other; "only try, and never be tired of trying, and God will do every thing for you, both here and in heaven; but remember, you mustn't try to do any thing of yourself, for then God's Spirit won't help, and you must always remember that if you don't do it by the assistance of the Spirit, you are only mocking God by pretending to be good, when, all the time, your heart is still bad." A violent fit of coughing prevented the speaker from continuing, and Catharine at every interval could hear her exclaim, "I shall soon be better, Susy, don't cry for me, God is very good to me." When it was over, which seemed quite to have exhausted her, she asked for something Catharine could not distinguish, till, shortly after, she heard the low but not unmusical voice of the other little one begin the sweet hymn,

"One there is, above all others," &c.

Catharine was greatly affected at the artless and

holy conversation of these dear children. She examined her own heart. "Is it possible that the simple experience of an unlettered child can testify against me? Merciful God!" she exclaimed, "how have I added to my condemnation by denying thy power." Tears (which she essayed in vain to repress) flowed fast; the torturing thought, that she had rendered herself an outcast from heaven, pressed on her with burning pain. She started up to leave the house, as if to fly from her own thoughts, but her strength failed;—she again seated herself—she covered her face with her hands, and her entire frame shook with emotion. From this state of mental agony she was roused by the entrance of the Widow Smith, who had been at the Hall to procure some necessaries for the invalid; her astonishment at seeing Catharine was increased on perceiving her tearful eyes and flushed countenance; she was aware of her relationship to Fanny, and had occasionally seen her with her. She hastened to enquire the cause of her distress, and tender her assistance if needed. Thanking her for her kindness, Catharine accepted her offered assistance, and, leaning on her arm, walked to the door; the reviving breeze reanimated her, and her emo-

tion gradually subsided. Aware that the poor widow must naturally be anxious to have her unexpected appearance in her humble dwelling accounted for, Catharine briefly mentioned the purport of her visit, frankly acknowledged all she had overheard of the children's conversation, and expressed a desire to be allowed to see and speak to the little Rachel, if she had no objection. The mother, a very decent, mild looking woman, seemed much gratified by the request, but humbly hinted that perhaps Catharine had better defer the interview, as she seemed still very poorly. "Thank you," replied Catharine, "I feel perfectly recovered now, and you will oblige me by mentioning my desire to your little girl, while I will remain here to know if she would like it."

The widow opened the door of the inner room, and telling Rachel that a lady, a relation of Miss Cameron's, had come to see her, she beckoned Catharine into the room.

On a small, but very clean bed, supported by pillows, reclined the little sufferer; her former ruddy cheeks were now become pallid, and her once healthy frame was emaciated and wasted; yet a perfect serenity seemed to have shed a holy calm around her, and Catharine, as she

gazed on her countenance, felt that she had never before beheld so finished a picture of contentedness. Seated on the bed was her twin sister, who, though plump and blooming, bore a striking likeness to the invalid; her arm was around poor Rachel's neck, and the yet unchilled tears were standing on her cheeks; a bible and small hymn-book were open on the bed, and every thing in the room, though extremely poor, was neatly and comfortably arranged. Seating herself on the only chair which the apartment afforded, Catharine enquired of the little one if she felt better?

“I feel every day weaker, ma'am, in body,” she replied, “but, Christ, I hope, is strengthening my soul; I know that soon, to me, the end of all things will be at hand.”

“Are you afraid to die?” asked Catharine.

“Afraid! Oh no, ma'am,” she answered, with much animation, “for I know my soul shall never die, for Christ is the life of my soul, and he can take away the sting of death.”

“How do you know that, Rachel?” Catharine enquired. “The bible tells me so, ma'am; our Saviour says, ‘Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.’” — “But, Ra-

chel, are you not afraid that your sins will keep you from heaven?"

Catharine was astonished to hear the child reply with redoubled confidence, "No, ma'am, for my kind Saviour has promised to take all my sins from me, and has sent his Holy Spirit to make my heart clean, and pure, and spotless, by the blood which he shed for me."

"And who told you that Christ and the Holy Spirit would do all this for you?"

"The bible, ma'am," said the little one laying her attenuated hand on the holy book; "it tells me that Jesus Christ made his own soul an offering for sin, that he might take away ours; he is called by such a lovely name,—‘the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world;’—and we are told, that ‘he who knew no sin became sin for us.’ See, ma'am, what great cause I have to trust him with all my sins."

"Then," said Catharine, "you are not, I hope, sorry to die?"

"Not when I think I am going to my Saviour, ma'am," she replied; "but yet, sometimes, I feel sorry to leave my poor mother and dear Susy here; but then I know God does every thing for the best, and that he will be

kind and good to them when I am gone." She looked affectionately at her mother, who, with tearful eyes, stood at the foot of the bed.— "Mother!" she exclaimed, "remember what Mr. Lindsay said yesterday, and what our dear, good Miss Cameron said to-day: 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.'"

Seeing that the exertion of talking had greatly exhausted poor Rachel, Catharine begged her to desist, and, saying she would call on the morrow with her cousin, was about to depart, when the earnestness of the child's look arrested her progress, and she enquired if she could do any thing to gratify her. The little creature pointed to the bible, and hoped the lady would read her one chapter before she went. Catharine again seated herself and took the offered book; she chose the 15th of the 1st of Corinthians, and never before had its solemnity and sublimity struck her with so much force; the child seemed to be perfectly familiar with every line, and her pale lips continued to move as Catharine proceeded. As she read the concluding verses, the little one's whole countenance was lit up with a holy rapture: she warmly thanked her visiter for her

kindness, expressing a hope that she would come with Miss Cameron. Catharine at length departed, followed by the grateful thanks of the widow, and impressed with feelings of a magnitude unfelt and unconceived before.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Thy tears all issue from a source divine,
And every drop bespeaks a Saviour thine."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."
Acts xvi. 31.

CATHARINE had gone but a few yards from the cottage door, and was slowly returning to the Hall, ruminating on all she had heard and seen in the lowly abode she had just quitted, when she was met by her uncle and Herbert Lindsay. "Alone, Catharine;" exclaimed the former, "and with such a sad perplexed brow:—how is this?" Catharine mentioned her unsuccessful search after Fanny, and asked for their kindly direction. Herbert offered to be her guide to where he thought it probable she might find her cousin, but added, that as she seemed fatigued from her long walk, and would now

have to traverse two or three fields to find the truant, Fanny, he would, if she wished, make his way thither by a nearer path, impassable to a female, and conduct her cousin to the house. Catharine thanked him for his kind consideration, and the young pastor, with his attendant Cæsar, were soon out of sight. Catharine decided immediately on revealing to her uncle the cause of her inquietude, and, whilst they slowly walked towards the Hall, Mr. Cameron read the letters handed to him by Catharine. He was not ignorant of any of the connecting circumstances, as Edgar had fully made them known to him, nor did he keep his unhappy companion long in suspense as to his opinion. He entered, with paternal solicitude, into her feelings; he endeavoured to set before her, in their legitimate colours, all the facts which bore so tremendously against the character and conduct of Melville; he lifted the veil from his artful hypocrisy, forcibly displayed the wreck he had nearly made in the mind and principles of her excellent brother by the infusion of his own deleterious sentiments, until God called Edgar from his alarming night of mental darkness to the glorious light and liberty of the gospel;—he then brought to her mind Mel-

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ville's inexcusable conduct with regard to herself, when, to aid his own designs, he could descend to dissimulation and falsehood, and practise it too on the unsuspecting integrity of that heart he professed to love, leading her to overlook the ties of consanguinity and affection, but, above all, inclining her to leave the path of duty in which she was walking, and turn again to the idols she had before relinquished.

"Oh! dear uncle," interrupted the self-convicted, conscious Catharine, "accuse him not of that; he drew me not from the service of God, for I know, by sad experience, that my heart was never firmly fixed in his service.—Long before I saw Melville, I felt that my duty was but a constrained one;—an eager desire for popularity, inflamed by my own inordinate vanity, was the main spring of my actions, and, though I was looked up to for my perseverance and zeal, I felt an inward consciousness of the impurity of the motives which impelled me to exertion; and though it may appear somewhat inconsistent, I candidly avow that it was with much satisfaction I found myself once again freed from the galling yoke with which I had so inconsiderately bound myself."

"A galling yoke, indeed," replied Mr. Ca-

meron: "to be compelled to appear what we are not, and follow on a self-inflicted, heartless duty, is indeed a toilsome servitude in any case, but in yours particularly oppressive, from the workings of the spirit within you, striving against your natural will. Oh! my child, had you then been earnest in prayer, and entreated help from on high, how would this mighty warfare, instead of overwhelming you with confusion, have redounded to the glory of God!"

"I could not then pray," returned Catharine: "indeed to whom could I pray, for I thought more of myself than of my God; and when I threw aside even the appearance of sanctity, I did all in my power most effectually to banish the idea of God; or if, for a moment, it did dart through my mind, it was ever accompanied with such a terror-striking sensation, that it was torment to endure it but for an instant."

Overpowered by the remembrance of her accumulated depravity, Catharine covered her hands, and sobbed aloud. They had now entered the shrubbery, and Mr. Cameron, conducting her to a garden-seat, seated himself by her side. "How true is it, my dear Catharine," he exclaimed, "that they who plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same;—though the

children of disobedience may succeed in blinding others, and even in deceiving their own hearts, still a dreadful sound is in their ears, and through the mists of Satan's delusion and their own fatal credulity, the still small voice will pierce the gloom, and inflict a sting on the world's worshippers, even while they are endeavouring to lull their souls into a delusive and ruinous tranquillity."—"Oh, I feel it! I feel it!" said Catharine, sobbing.

Mr. Cameron now returned to the subject of the letters. "I would strongly advise you, my dear child," he said, "not to postpone replying to these. I need not, I am convinced, urge you to be decisive in your reply to Mr. Melville, so as to leave no question as to your sentiments with regard to his unprincipled conduct. To your aunt, who has evidently been misled and deceived by the specious sophistry of an experienced worldling, your own feelings will dictate all you should say. Ah! here comes Fanny; and our good Herbert!"

Catharine looked at Fanny as she lightly advanced; the breeze had added greater brilliancy to her cheek, and had diffused a lovely animation over her frame; she hurried on, leaning on Herbert, and escorted by the joyous

Cæsar, who gambolled and curvetted by her side, and Catharine sighed as she contrasted the guileless simplicity and unsophisticated feelings of the fair being before her, with her own dark and sin-burthened heart. The fond father, too, could not repress a smile of paternal pride and affection, as his child tripped lightly towards him; and Catharine, who seemed to have waited for her with the greatest impatience, quickly linked her arm within her cousin's, and turned towards the house; while the gentlemen pursued their walk, which Catharine had previously interrupted.

How wonderful are the ways of Providence, in arresting a sinful soul from its dark bondage! How strange to human thought, that the proud pharisaical disposition, which rebelled or set at nought all the attempts of reason and of argument, should be led to see its deformity, by the quiet, unobtrusive example of a child of God, and in humbleness of heart to seek for assistance and advice in the light of God's law, that wonder-working engine of Omnipotence, by which the sinner's heart is subdued, and stripped of its imaginary righteousness,—is made to look at the alone atonement for sin in the completion of the sacrifice on Mount Calvary. Not aware

of the gracious power which was operating in the heart of her cousin, it was with some surprise that Fanny heard her request, some time after the events recorded above, to be allowed to accompany her that day in her visit to Rachel Smith and others. With a countenance of the most joyful surprise Fanny acquiesced, at the same time looking towards her father, to ascertain what effect Catharine's unexpected request had on him. "I shall most sincerely rejoice, my dear niece," exclaimed Mr. Cameron, "if the standard of rebellion against God, which you have for so long a period unfurled, should now be for ever laid aside, and, as a preliminary step, I hail your desire of embracing some active duties, not that this can in any way be effectual towards acceptance with God; but, as a necessary proof of repentance and faith, it is every way desirable."—"And, dear uncle," enquired Catharine, "would you deem it presumptuous of me, in again desiring to commence a career of usefulness?"

"That depends entirely on your motives, Catharine," he replied; "if you are stimulated by an anxious wish to please God, and to struggle against your own natural corruptions, you are undoubtedly following the path of duty

—but if, on the other hand, you are again led by a lurking desire after vain glory and popularity, you will be but heaping up to yourself wrath against the dreadful day of wrath; therefore, examine well your motives before you again enlist under the banner of the cross.”

Catharine quickly explained: her uncle had misinterpreted her, or she had not clearly defined her purposes. She only desired at present, by God’s assistance, to *accompany* Fanny in all her labours of love, for her own edification and improvement; her former degrading apostacy, and the disrepute and dishonour she had done to religion must incline her to dread so soon again putting forth her own strength; therefore, for a time, she would be but a silent, though she trusted not an unblessed, observer of her cousin’s conduct.

Mr. Cameron again pressed on her the duty of strict self-examination.

“I have endeavoured,” replied Catharine, “and oh! I trust, with great self-abasement, to examine my own heart; but, alas! what a catalogue of iniquities I there beheld; I remembered my sins and follies, I felt my own helplessness, and I became truly wretched.”—“And from whence did you look for relief, my dear child?”

enquired Mr. Cameron. "I long struggled with my feelings," she continued, "my bosom foe, self-righteousness, continued still to be my bane; it rose against the power of God, inciting me to gloss over my bad qualities, or shape them into virtues."—"And did this impart comfort?" said Mr. Cameron. "Oh! no, no: it was a truly miserable comforter," replied the self-abased girl; "and I yearned after that peace which I thought was beyond my reach; but, to my beloved Fanny, am I indebted, under God, for the removal of much of the burden under which I groaned." In tearful surprise, her friends awaited an explanation. "I will not describe, dear uncle," she continued, the feelings that held umpire over me after my first introduction to Fanny; suffice it, that I was soon impressed with envy, both at her natural and acquired advantages, which feeling I daily cloaked by a detestable hypocrisy, and appeared all love;—strange as it may appear, I could not, however, divest myself of some degree of affection and respect for her, which her unostentatious desire to please must have elicited from a heart even more steeled against her than mine—this I felt more forcibly when separated from her. I will not dwell on the scene of duplicity I practised

while in Brighton; nor my subsequent abandonment of every appearance of sanctity on my removal to Paris; yet even then, when most alienated from God, the remembrance of Fanny's humble, holy, and, as I was forced to confess, spiritual walk in life, often embittered my draught of iniquitous pleasures, and robbed me of the enjoyment I foolishly anticipated. Overcome with the recollection of her delinquency, Catharine was for some time unable to resume her confession, until encouraged by her uncle: she continued, "To be brief,—you, my dear uncle, who have so much penetration and insight into character, must speedily have discovered the pride, and discontent, and stubbornness of my heart, long after I had taken up my abode here; though I endeavoured to mask it under the appearance of much resignation, and by an apathetic and imperative acquiescence, in an uncontrolled power, deceive myself and others into the supposition that I was perfectly satisfied with the will of God. Long and obstinately did I struggle against conviction, and oh! when it did strike to my heart, with what an overwhelming accumulation of woe did it come; I abhorred the light which had shown me the magnitude of my offences, I tried to my

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from myself and my agonizing thoughts—but in vain; until a merciful Providence directed me to the balm in Gilead, the blessed physician there; and, dear Fanny, I am sure you will be surprised and no less gratified to hear, that your little dying scholar, Rachel Smith, was the humble means employed to draw me to God's written law, and to incline me to open my heart to the influence of the Spirit, and to throw aside my robe of self-esteem." The surprise of Mr. Cameron and his daughter were extreme; as they had never conceived the possibility of such a channel for the display of God's grace on the haughty Catharine; and they became impatient to hear all she had to say.

She related her first visit to the cottage, described the children's conversation and its effect on her, subsequently the comforting hopes she heard expressed by the little one; and her own feelings on reading the impressive portion of Scripture she had chosen. "I did intend," she added, "to have revealed all my feelings to you, dear Fanny, on my return; but I foolishly supposed that you, whose life had been so different, could neither enter into or understand them; I therefore kept it from your knowledge; but impressed with an earnest desire to hear

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more of the kingdom of God, without making known to my kind friends here the oppression which I laboured, I became from that time a daily visitor at the humble dwelling of my dear mother, and soon learnt to prize those precious truths herein I gleaned; heavenly knowledge even from the lips of a babe."

"You told me, Catharine," said the delighted Fanny, "but how could this possibly have continued so long without my knowing it?" I am surprised that Rachel herself never hinted it."

"The secrecy which I maintained," returned Catharine, "was an indubitable proof of the existence still of my most besetting sin, pride; this it was that prevented me from making you or my kind uncle aware of my feelings, and it was thus alone inclined me to in poor secrecy on my poor little instructress; thus you see, to my discredit, the mystery is solved."

"Not entirely solved as yet, Catharine," exclaimed Mr. Cameron; "you have not yet shown what at length actuated you to this confession."

"I had long been deterred on it, sir," she replied, "but the workings of sin within me destroyed my good resolutions; as he arose, all

from myself and my agonizing thoughts—but in vain; until a merciful Providence directed me to the balm in Gilead, the blessed physician there; and, dear Fanny, I am sure you will be surprised and no less gratified to learn that your little dying scholar, Rachel Smith, was the humble means employed to draw me from the written law, and to incline to the living physician to the influence of the Spirit, and to throw aside my robe of self-esteem.” The surprise of Mr. Cameron and his daughter were extremely great, as they had never conceived the possibility of such a channel for the display of God’s power on the haughty Catharine, and they were impatient to hear all she had to say.

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me of the kingdom of God, without making known to my kind friends here the oppression under which I laboured, I became from that time forth a stranger at the humble dwelling of my dear friends, and soon learnt to prize those precious moments wherein I gleaned heavenly truths from the lips of a babe."

"And now, Catharine," said the dejected lady, "not how could this possibly have occurred so long without my knowing it?"—she supposed that Rachel herself never would admit it.

"The very thing, I maintained," returned Catharine, "was an indubitable proof of the existence still of my most besetting sin, pride; this it was that prevented me from making you or my fond uncle aware of my feelings, and it was this alone inclined me to my present ceremony on my poor little instructress; thus you see, to my discredit, the mystery is solved."

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"You must have me, Catharine," said the delighted lady, "but how could this possibly have continued so long without my knowing it?" "A surprise that Rachel herself never imagined it."

"The secrecy which I maintained," returned Catharine, "was an indubitable proof of the existence still of my most besetting sin, pride; this it was that prevented me from making you or my kind uncle aware of my feelings, and it was this alone inclined me to improper secrecy on my poor little instructress; thus you see, to my discredit, the mystery is solved."

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"You told me, Catharine," said the daughter, "but how could this possibly have continued so long without my knowing it?" I am surprised that Rachel herself saw and named it."

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a long and interesting conversation with *our* very excellent friend, Mr. Lindsay, "stripped me of the lingering remains of all my imaginary excellencies, and showed me forcibly that I was still a most unworthy recipient of divine grace."

"Faithful Herbert," said Mr. Cameron; "he has, I trust, well redeemed the pledge he made your brother at parting."

"Nothing," continued Catharine, "could exceed his anxiety to impress me with right ideas on the all-important subject of the Christian's ground of acceptance with God, and while he displayed the ubiquity of the Creator, and filled me with an indescribable fear of offending him by an indulgence in iniquitous and bosom sins, he taught me that the alone means of subduing or repressing them was by applying to that fountain which is opened for sin and for every uncleanness; he exhorted me to turn to the strong-hold of a Saviour's love, and exterminate for ever the degrading idol I had so long set up instead." Catharine ceased, while her uncle, who had been deeply interested in this avowal of her feelings and sentiments, now exhorted her to steadfastness and constancy, and above all, prayed that her present humility and

self-distrust might not forsake her. Catharine trembled as he proceeded, knowing the fatal error into which she had before run, and she sent up a secret aspiration to the throne of mercy for strength and support.

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CHAPTER XV.

"Let the wide earth resound the deeds
Celestial grace hath done."

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of."—*Cor.* vii. 10

WHEN the efficacious work of grace has been wrought in the soul of a sinner, he becomes spiritually a new creature; the former darkness of his understanding is superseded by the glorious light which descends from on high; his affections, which before were poisoned and uncurbed, receive their antidote and check from the new and heavenly direction of the spirit; the wishes and desires which had, till now, risen in rebellion against the majesty of heaven, instigating the unregenerate soul to choose the evil and reject the good, are, by the transforming influence of grace, drawn from their

narrow and debasing hold, and taught to aspire after the favour of God revealed in the channel of Christ's redemption,—the bulwark of self-sufficiency is demolished, the standard of pride is plucked up, and their opposing endowments, happiness and peace, become the occupants of the sinner's heart. The will is attuned to holiness, and longs to transform its possessor into the image of Christ: and to this end, the sinner, though now purified, will feel a daily sorrow for the transgressions of his life, but it will be a sorrow after a godly sort, working carefulness to do the will of God—self-examination and forsaking of sin—concern for constant failures, fear of God and self-distrust—and anxious desire after holiness. The value of such an offering as this, will ascend to the merciful Giver, through the blood of the eternal covenant, and the poor soul saved by that blood, and made holy by that Spirit, will, in the fulness of time, be also glorified.

Catharine's repentance was genuine, and it necessarily produced the visible fruits;—she became benevolent without ostentation, and zealous without hypocrisy. Distrustful of herself, she yielded implicitly to the advice of more experienced Christians, and was daily ac-

quiring information and light. From Edgar, who had heard, with fervent gratitude, of the mercy of God, towards her, Catharine frequently heard, which communications greatly tended to strengthen her faith. His last letter made known the unexpected intelligence, that his restless aunt, Miss Evelyn, had made her way at length to Tudor Hall, intending to be his guest for some time; and she now united with him in anxiously requesting her to fix an early day for her journey homewards, now so long delayed. "As an inducement," he added, "we have a most desirable addition to our society, in the family of Mr. Monteith, who has purchased an estate about five miles from the Hall; I think my good uncle would like them—pious, sincere, unostentatious. The old gentleman has already, by his extensive benevolence, made me ashamed of the little I have done for the amelioration and improvement of my fellow man. To one member of this worthy family I have promised your friendship and esteem, and I feel confident of having my pledge redeemed; for Louisa Monteith, my friend's eldest daughter, is every way calculated to elicit your affection and respect: perhaps you will be more inclined to acknowledge this

when I inform you, that in disposition, manners, and inclination, she bears a striking resemblance to our good little Fanny; this struck me even on my first introduction, and our subsequent more intimate acquaintance has not inclined me to alter my opinion." As considerably as possible, in a concluding paragraph, Edgar informed his sister, that the graceless Charles Melville, after having plunged still deeper into every scene of iniquitous pleasure, had associated himself with some desperate gamblers, and had one night, in the height of madness, penned a challenge, which was accepted; they fought—his adversary fell—and, to avoid the rigour of the law, Melville had fled to the continent, where he was now, doubtless, pursued with all the horrors of a guilty conscience, and an impenitent heart.

Here was a cause of devout thankfulness to the Giver of all Good, in having snatched Catharine from being the prey of the despised Melville; and oh! how fervently, while she blessed God for his goodness, did she entreat the light of his grace to dawn on the darkened mind of the guilty man; that he, wretched as he was, might yet be saved. To her brother's request for her society, Catharine knew not

what to reply; she felt grieved to disappoint him, but could not, at present, consent to part from Fanny. Besides, she dreaded the influence of a more extensive and different order of society, and feared again to mix with the world, lest she should once more assimilate with its false enjoyments. She referred the matter to her uncle, and was decided by him. He purposed, early in the spring, to take a journey to London, and, as he had long promised himself the pleasure of visiting Tudor Hall, he proposed that she should defer her journey till that time, when he could accompany her. This she joyfully intimated to Edgar in reply, and, satisfied with having given herself so long a respite, she pursued, with redoubled alacrity, her now most interesting and pleasing duties.

In the mean time their little protégé, Rachel Smith, had passed the dark valley, filled with holy faith and confidence. Catharine witnessed the final struggle, which left an indelible impression on her mind; and that she, too, might die the death of the righteous, she daily prayed to be enabled to live the life of the righteous, crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts;—nor did she plead in vain. The world,

which had before absorbed her every faculty, and engrossed her mind, gradually lost all its charms, all its attractions; and, in contemplating her own brief, though unjustifiable career of darkness and of sin, she was led to exclaim, in the words of the psalmist, "My soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers, the snare is broken, and I am delivered."

With feelings of heartfelt joy, and gratitude to God, did Mr. Cameron and Herbert Lindsay behold the progressive influence of divine grace in their young friend's heart, while Fanny's affection increased proportionably.

Engaged in what they deemed a privileged duty, that of administering to the wants of the necessitous, and disseminating the principles of Christianity to all within reach of their influence, our young friends heeded not the rapid flight of time, and almost imperceptibly the spring, with its attendant beauties, stole on them. Catharine had received repeated letters from her aunt, who had long since forgotten her former resentment, urging her speedy departure from Woodville. In the last she hinted her suspicion that Catharine would not long be sole mistress of the Hall, at least if appearances were

credible. Having already had experience in her aunt's ready delusion in affairs of this nature, Catharine felt very indifferent at the communication.

At length the day of parting was fixed, and each individual of our little party beheld its approach with regret. Fanny was to accompany her father and Catharine to London, where she purposed remaining with an old friend of her dear mother's, until her father's return from Yorkshire.

On the evening previous to their departure, Mr. Cameron and Catharine were seated near the fire, the latter had entered on her favourite topic, that of describing the effect which Fanny's example, in different situations, had had on her and descanting (as she did whenever Fanny's absence gave an opportunity) on the graces of the spirit exemplified in so lovely a manner on her cousin. "And do you not find, dear uncle," she added, "that the worth and value of friends seem to increase, when we are about to relinquish their dear society,—we then seem to have a more acute and vivid perception of all their excellencies, and oh! how much more so when these beloved friends have, through God, been the means of introducing a new principle into a

sinner's soul. Is it not calculated to strengthen the bond of union which exists between them?"

"It is," replied Mr. Cameron; "I know of no closer bond on earth, and blessed be God, it is a union which will not be dissolved, but will be consummated throughout a blissful eternity."

"What a peace imparting thought," said Catharine. After a pause, Mr. Cameron exclaimed, "I often fear, Catharine, that even Christians are sometimes not sufficiently cautious in the display of their sentiments towards one another, and are occasionally led to hold up a fellow sinner as a model for imitation." Catharine smiled, "Dear uncle."—"Forgive me, Catharine, said Mr. Cameron, "I know what you would say, that the purity of your cousin's principles could not be corrupted by your injudicious and unqualified praises?"—"For once, uncle," replied Catharine, "you have not justly anticipated my meaning."

"No! well you must be your own interpreter."

"I would have said," exclaimed Catharine, "that when I see piety and consistency exemplified in so eminent a degree, I can not see why I should withhold my decided admiration of it,

feeling as I do a painful sense of my own inferiority by the comparison."

"But, my dear girl," replied her uncle, "as no perfect standard can be met with in the flesh, surely, praise for the graces bestowed on a poor sinner by the Almighty, is misdirected when applied to the creature,—the work is all of God, and to him alone can praise be justly attributed." "'Tis true, my dear sir," said Catharine, "and I acknowledge my too great liability to be led away by my feelings, when speaking of those I love; but still you mistake me, if you imagine I have erected, as a standard of perfection, even one whom I consider the least faulty being I know, for I feel assured that pious and consistent as is our dear Fanny, she partakes of the inherent pollution of the human species, and oh! far be it from me to transfer to a human being, though a lovely transcript of the great original, the peculiar praise and honour which is due alone to the eternal God."

"Assuredly, my dear child," remarked her uncle.

"But sir," continued she, "with this impression full on my mind, is it dishonouring Jehovah, that I should feel and acknowledge the

brightness of that example, which he made instrumental in the healing of my soul. When I have been dejected and disheartened, Emily has, by some salutary admonition, or some inspiring stroke of benevolence, raised and encouraged me,—my lukewarmness has often been enkindled by her untired activity—my temporary deviations from duty have become less frequent while contemplating the steady lustre of her faith,—while the sudden and exuberant bursts of zeal which I have at times testified, have been checked or modulated by her unassuming perseverance. All this I have experienced since I came here, and now, dear uncle, tell me, am I wrong in the acknowledgment of these favours?”

“In the acknowledgment, certainly not,” replied Mr. Cameron, “but it must ever and always be with reference to the blessed distributor of the gifts you extol:—it is natural that you should manifest an interest in the display of those graces which have been the channel of God’s mercy to you, teaching you to rely on the blood and righteousness of Christ, for justification before him; but, my dear girl, your terms should be more qualified, more circumspect—for though even it may not be prejudicial to

yourself, how can you expect it for its effects upon others, perhaps of a weaker nature, were they to hear you thus extolling your goodness, might they not perceive in it its unchristian model of righteousness, and reverence the earthly vessel in which the treasure is lodged rather than the treasure which sanctifies the vessel?"

"You are right, dear uncle," said the convicted Catharine, "quite right, and I more and more see my own inconsistencies. — Oh! when shall I be endued with such graces of the Spirit, as not to be the creature of feeling and passion that I now am."

"Catherine, my love, I repeat to thee uncle, as you should not be unnecessarily distressed about the measure of grace God thinks fit to bestow on you, but in patience and prayer await the manifestations of his will; distrust not the promises God's law reveals, — divine grace is stable and sure, not subject to withdrawal or failure; depend on your Saviour's faithfulness, and in due time you will reap, if you fan it not."

Herbert Lindsay, who had promised to spend this last evening with his friends at the Hall, now made his appearance, which was ever hailed with sincere delight; his instructive and interesting conversation, and its practical and

and a dual application in the hearts of the champions, toward each other and self-seekers.

Of this interesting discourse was particularly addressed to her mother, which she had since her arrival, had been anxious to peruse; and he saw her ardor to improve her own feelings, and desired to prune the tree to excellent fruit, and to lop off its unnecessary shoots. Knowing the diversities of opinions she would have to encounter, in a more enlarged sphere of society, and the opposition which her recent reception as the convert of the Bible would be sure to bring upon her, he exhorted her to exert her strength, and to stand, by concentrating and directing all her powers to the standard of the Scriptures, as the directory and rule of her life; thus practically to vindicate the religion of the Gospel, and silence the voices of its opposers. "But thank not, my dear Miss Evelyn," continued Herbert, "your speaking on this subject; I thank not that whole for your this mild and demonstrating evidence of your sincerity; I wish you to adopt a bolder course, which would not gloss over the truth. Of course, ever cultivate that steady consistency, which will be ready always to go on and sever from any man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear, showing a

yourself, how can you answer for its effects upon others, perhaps of a weaker mind: were they to hear you thus extolling your cousin, might they not picture from it some finished model of righteousness, and reverence the earthly vessel in which the treasure is lodged rather than the treasure which sanctifies that vessel?"

"You are right, dear uncle," said the convicted Catharine, "quite right, and I more and more see my own inconsistencies. Oh! when shall I be endued with such graces of the Spirit, as not to be the creature of feeling and passion that I now am."

"Catharine, my love," returned her uncle, "you should not be unnecessarily distressed about the measure of grace God thinks fit to bestow on you, but in patience and prayer await the manifestations of his will; distrust not the promises God's law reveals,—divine grace is stable and sure, not subject to withdrawal or failure; depend on your Saviour's faithfulness, and in due time you will reap, if you faint not."

Herbert Lindsay, who had promised to spend this last evening with his friends at the Hall, now made his appearance, which was ever hailed with sincere delight; his instructive and interesting conversation, and its practical and

individual application on the hearts of his hearers, made him a universal favourite.

On this evening his discourse was principally addressed to Catharine, which, indeed, since her arrival, had been his usual practice: he saw her ardent temper and warm feelings, and desired to prune the too luxuriant plant and lop off its unnecessary shoots. Knowing the diversities of opinions she would have to encounter, in a more enlarged sphere of society, and the opposition which her recent reception of the doctrines of the Bible would meet with, he endeavoured to fortify and strengthen her mind, by concentrating and directing all her ideas to the standard of the Scriptures, as the directory and rule of her life; thus practically to vindicate the religion of the Gospel, and shame the malice of its opposers. “But think not, my dear Miss Evelyn,” continued Herbert, when speaking on this subject, “think not that while I enjoin this mild and demonstrating evidence of your sincerity, I wish you to adopt a false meekness, which could not glory in the truth. Oh! no, ever cultivate that steady consistency which will be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear, ‘having a

good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.”

Mr. Cameron now remarked the error into which many young people fall, by their fondness for proselytizing, in their eagerness for which they are apt to forget their own dependence, and become supine in their self-watchfulness, which is much to be dreaded, as it often bewilders them in their mystical web of self-commendation and pride, and has a tendency to quench that light, in whose rays they first set out. Seeing Catharine look at him with tearful eyes, conscious of having formerly come under this just remark, Mr. Cameron added, that though he thus warned her of the many dangers by which she was surrounded, he did it not in such distrust of her, as he had on a former occasion felt, for he now fondly hoped better things from her.

“Dear, dear uncle,” exclaimed Catharine, “say not one word that would incline me to think well of myself: I feel a most sensible mortification, when I recur to past experience, and am forced to say I can do nothing. Want of humility, added to a contemptible pride, was

ever my most besetting sin, and were I to hear my best friends inclined to trust me, I should fear that that vanity, which so few despise, should again be my bane."

"It is a lamentable fact," remarked Herbert, "that vanity, which is the main-spring of so much impiety and wickedness, should in general, be ranked among venial, or very inconsiderable faults,—it is a despicable and debasing principle, and should be classed as such, instead of being extolled, as it too frequently is, and made the medium of much detriment to the soul. I doubt not, Miss Evelyn," continued he, "but you can testify to its pernicious effects—the follies to which it led—the weaknesses it glossed over—the absurdities it conciliated. Its very nature must impart a false confidence to the flesh, which is calculated to bring shame on its possessor, and dim the vision of that high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, for its desires are unsatiable, 'growing on what it feeds on.'"

Fanny, who had been busily engaged during the evening, in making the necessary preparations for their next day's journey, and her short stay in town, now summoned them to the tea table, and the conversation once more turn-

ed on their approaching separation. The girls planned a constant unreserved correspondence. Catharine earnestly requested Mr. Cameron to continue by letter his much valued advice and instructions. "Any plan I have in contemplation," continued she, either for the religious or moral welfare of myself or others, will not be quite satisfactory to me, until I obtain your approval of it, for though I feel convinced of the absolute necessity of laying every case before the Lord, and abiding by the decision of his word, yet, I am so fearful of again falling into the error of fancying that I am acting under that influence, while, in reality, I may but be following the dictates of a corrupt heart, that I think a reference to you would both animate my exertions, and destroy any false erected fabric I may form." Her uncle kindly promised her any assistance and advice in his power, at the same time warning her not to rely on that or any human aid, but, with a humble and teachable spirit, to make known her wants to her Maker, and look on high for aid.

Notwithstanding all her endeavours to the contrary, Catharine could not overcome the feeling of despondency which the contemplation of leaving Woodville inspired. Herbert

endeavoured to keep up the cheerfulness of the party, but without success. At length, turning to Fanny, he exclaimed, "Tell me, Fanny, did I so ill acquit myself of the duties entrusted to me during your last unconscionably long visit to the metropolis, that I should not again be offered the responsible situation of your almoner, and general agent? Methinks," he added, smiling, "such conduct savours not of charity, when you would thus endeavour to abridge the enjoyments of a poor recluse; but tell me, how have you arranged matters?"

"As usual, Herbert," she replied, "I must be a dependant on your kindness, and again load you with additional cares and duties, though I have less regret in doing so since you class them among your highest gratifications."

Fanny sighed as she contrasted her present situation with the time when last she had delivered to Herbert his instructions; for, then, her tender parent was at her side, to aid and assist her. Brushing away the tears which dimmed her eyes, she entered immediately on the subject; and Catharine, who also found additional employment for Herbert's activity, soon followed her example. Their ready listener heard all they had to say, acquainted himself,

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with their wishes respecting the objects of their solicitude—the peculiar cases of some individuals, and the readiest plans for relief or comfort, and kindly promised to fulfil their desires to the best of his ability.

Mr. Cameron now warned them that as they were to start at an early hour in the morning, they would need rest, and had already greatly exceeded their usual sober hour. Being thus admonished, Herbert assembled the household, and, after concluding their evening devotions, rose to depart, saying “that the inhospitable looks of his host had fairly driven him away.” With unfeigned regret, Catharine parted from her persevering admonisher, gratefully thanking him for his zealous efforts, and humbly trusting to God for their success.

CHAPTER XVI.

“Early morning—Edgar had called on the 10th of
February, and had been conversing with—”

“Then we had a happy opportunity of conversing with—”
Edgar, &c. &c.

CATHARINE’S journey from London to Yorkshire was rendered so agreeable by the instructive and entertaining conversation of her uncle that she had little leisure to lament her separation from Fanny: and on the third evening, when they came within view of the much loved scenes of her childhood, she wept with grateful joy at again beholding that which, in perspective, she had so foolishly dreaded to contemplate.

Edgar, with a countenance beaming content and happiness, affectionately welcomed the travellers, tenderly embracing his ever fondly

loved sister, who was now become doubly dear to him.

Miss Evelyn was in ecstasies at again beholding Catharine, and could not repress the admiration which her improved appearance excited. The joyous happy countenance she now gazed on, was a delightful contrast to the wan and haggard aspect of her fair niece, when immersed in the vortex of Parisian or London dissipation; the artificial bloom—the evident effort to appear what the heart sickened at—the constant recurrence to stimulants and excitements in order to keep in action the unnatural flow of vivacity—the assumption of cheerfulness, which masked the inward wretchedness, and all the heart-corroding and soul-consuming impositions which the god of worldlings lays on his votaries; these had been all exercised by that Spirit, who, by a word “I charge thee to come out;” can chase the demon of destruction from the soul of every moral demoniac, and lead him renewed and sane to the footstool of grace. Catharine’s countenance was now in fact the real index of her mind—she felt as she looked; the balm of a pure and perfect faith had shed its influence in her soul, and displayed its heavenly radiance over every look and

movement; she had indeed become a being of another stamp—a new creation—a regenerated soul—a child of God. Her delighted brother marked the traces of Jehovah's finger in the work of grace on the poor sinner, and gratefully returned the meed of praise to Him, to whom alone it was justly due; even Miss Evelyn could not long remain in ignorance, that the change now wrought in her niece was in effects widely different to that superficial profession which she had before so eagerly embraced. She beheld her now evidently acting through conviction; her religion had become a principle affecting her whole life and character, and offering a glorious substitute for the falsely-called pleasures of this world. She had, indeed, before witnessed her withdrawing for a time from all her former diversions, but the relinquishment of these pleasures was only superseded by a false assumption of piety. She had even beheld her engaged, apparently with much zeal, in the active duties of benevolence, but the spring of those actions was impure—the motive selfish—and it produced not, *as now*, the visible fruits of holiness, and the salutary enjoyment of inward peace. She had then continued to be governed by a conformity to the

world, and the desire of praise,—not from any heartfelt persuasion that she should act according to the Gospel rule for Christ's sake alone. But, now, Miss Evelyn felt that something more than a mere outward change had operated on her dear niece,—some inward and established principle shed reality on her external bearing—disinterestedness influenced her conduct, and consistency shone in her actions. To what to impute this transformation, Miss Evelyn knew not, but, that the alteration in her niece had materially improved her, admitted of no doubt.

Catharine was kindly welcomed by all her former friends; many of whom, from an experimental knowledge of its efficacy, hailed with joy the change which God's goodness had effected in her heart and mind;—others smiled at what they termed her weakness, or ridiculed her singular principles. And did Catharine now, as on a former occasion, retaliate by opposing invective to ridicule? or fancy herself the subject of persecution, because her singularity drew down the disapprobation of the world's favourites? Oh! no; her mind was now elevated above such puerile and unworthy feelings: besides, the fear of delusion acted as

a beacon to guard her from the whirlpool of pride and self-complacency, which had before so swallowed up every dawning of a better principle.

Yielding to the request of Edgar, and the importunate entreaties of his niece, Mr. Cameron outstaid his prescribed time. He was much pleased with the worthy family of the Monteiths, with whom he found Edgar intimately associated, and was not long left in ignorance as to his nephew's future hopes and prospects; and, ere his departure, Mr. Cameron satisfied Edgar, by his warm approbation of his choice, and his sincere congratulations on it.

Many valuable and instructive conversations Catharine enjoyed with her uncle during his stay in Yorkshire, all tending to strengthen her faith,—to extinguish the still unsubdued lingering remains of pride, and to crush the besetting sin, her bosom foe, which might still influence and direct her conduct, though concealed from the nicest observation; and, to this end, he frequently recalled to her mind, that the Christian (even the more advanced and spiritually minded one) has incessant need to watch his heart, and detect and bring to light the first workings of sin within him. That

this continued watchfulness is quite as requisite when, to all human appearance, he needs it not, as when in the earliest stages of his religious course, he discerned its absolute necessity. Catharine felt the truth of all his observations, and gladly endeavoured to exhibit a practical comment on them. It was, however, with unfeigned regret, that she saw him depart; though the anticipated receipt of his letters, and, above all, the prospect of visiting Woodville the ensuing autumn, reconciled her in some measure to the event. This invitation to Woodville was extended to more than Catharine; in the course of a few weeks, Edgar hoped to be united to Louisa Monteith, and if no unforeseen event occurred to alter their determination, they purposed, accompanied by Mr. Monteith, Miss Evelyn, and Catharine, to pay the much wished for visit to Woodville, towards the close of the summer.

Time rolled on, and Catharine continued to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God's word, which had now become a firm and operative principle within her; nor were the happy effects of her consistency undiscernible, even in this life—many of her young and thoughtless companions were led, by her pious

precedent, to examine for themselves by what power their young, and before much worldly-minded friend had attained her present spiritual advantages. Even Miss Evelyn, to whom religion had ever been but a cold and repelling principle, without any vital importance or soul-satisfying hope, felt, with something like the force of truth, that till now, instead of being "altogether" a Christian, she had not been even "almost" one;—that, though baptized into the faith of Christ, she was, as yet, no member of the spiritual church;—that, nominally, she was a Christian, but in reality an idolater;—that, though possessing an immortal and never-dying soul, she had, as yet, been living as "having no hope, and without God in the world." These important considerations had been suggested during the first two months after Catharine's return, the demonstration of which appeared in the relinquishment of many of Miss Evelyn's worldly propensities, and an anxiety for something more enduring. Thus, the eagerness with which she imbibed that stream of corruption emanating from licentious and truth-perverting novels, had gradually subsided; that incessant restlessness of disposition which had ever characterized her, was in a

measure repressed by her anxious desire to emulate her amiable and happy niece in deeds of kindness and benevolence; that spirit of detraction, which she once seemed to glory in cultivating, was robbed of its enjoyment; and, though apparently impelled by the unworthy motive of creature-love, Miss Evelyn was daily making an effort to overcome the world. But it was not till after her visit to Woodville that, to a casual observer, any decided change had occurred in her character; that visit indeed was, in the sequel, blessed to her—she there beheld the same principles influencing many entire households, and the pious and humble spirit of their excellent pastor imbibed by a large portion of his flock;—this added encouragement to her endeavours, and the event justified her hopes.

“Catharine’s meeting with her cousin was demonstrative of the influence Fanny’s unprejudiced mind had acquired over her, and which absence seemed only to have increased; nor was Fanny less susceptible of pleasure on her cousin’s return. Edgar and his amiable wife, no less than her worthy father, shared in the mutual joy at this happy meeting, and when we add Miss Evelyn’s unusually con-

tented look, and our friend Herbert's satisfied recognition of his old friends, we are fain to conclude, that few pictures of mortal felicity could be more complete.

As is usual in such visits, the day of departure, though frequently named, was again forgotten, and Mr. Cameron's guests beheld the close of autumn ere they had decided on separating. Having prolonged their stay to such a limit, they were easily prevailed on to lengthen it still further, by the prospect of being witnesses of an event, the anticipation of which appeared to diffuse universal joy throughout the entire neighbourhood: this was the union of Herbert Lindsay with our favourite, Fanny, a union founded on mutual esteem and reciprocity of sentiment. It had been anticipated ere Mrs. Cameron had paid the debt of nature, and she, with all the tenderness of maternal love, had fondly hoped to bless their union; but, alas! we know not what a day may bring forth! we foresee not the event of any cherished desire, or how far we may be participants in its fulfilment. Death had sealed his victim, and the mother joyed not in the felicity of her child; but there was *one* heart which deeply and tenderly participated in the happi-

ness of the bride; and as the worthy father, with full confidence in the excellencies of his esteemed friend, bestowed on him, with an approving smile, his tenderly beloved child, *his* heart felt even a mother's love with all a father's considerate solicitude, while, to the Giver of all Good, his grateful thanks ascended.

Long had the neighbourhood of Woodville reason to rejoice in this propitious union: hand in hand the pious pair now prosecuted their schemes of benevolence and love; and their influence, wherever extended was hailed with approval and complacency. Of one soul in religion, they continued mutually to aid and strengthen each other, manifesting the purity and sincerity of their faith in all things, taking as their rule and guide that blessed word which was able to make them wise unto salvation, and evincing, by their continued activity and godliness, that they were operative recipients of that grace so freely bestowed on them.

Do my young readers enquire if Catharine Evelyn still advanced in her Christian course?—She did—her faith, now a firmly rooted principle, withstood the machinations of the prince of darkness, and her mind became daily more spiritually enlightened. She continued to re-

side, alternately, with her brother, and her beloved Fanny. When subsequent events, however, placed her in a more conspicuous situation, and her usefulness became more extended, she continued still to retain that humility so descriptive of a follower of Christ, and, while endeavouring to adorn the doctrine of her Saviour in all things, she forgot not that most important warning, "watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Often as she pondered over the amazing extent of that debt of grace she owed in the electing goodness of her God, she would love to trace, at every step, the finger of Almighty God, the parent fountain of all wonders. By his blessed direction she beheld the lovely evidences of Fanny's faith effectual to the subjugation of her own rebellious feelings; and by the power of that blessed Spirit whom she had despised and dishonoured, she traced the interest her cousin's unassuming worth had acquired over her, attracting her, at length, to the only efficacious remedy for sinners, in the blood of the everlasting covenant.

May my young Christian readers thus evidence *their* interest in a crucified Redeemer, and, while they study to adorn *this* doctrine;

by the purity of their lives and the steadfastness of their faith, may they be the chosen channels in *His* hands, of imparting that saving grace to the souls of others, which so freely was bestowed upon themselves!——“Go and do thou likewise.”

THE END.

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